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### Objectives of Parish Education

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Every religious educator, whether he be pastor, teacher, or Sunday school superintendent, must be aware of and have an understanding of the objectives of his parish program of education. Leaders of the Church must have before them specific goals which describe in concrete terms what they are trying to effect through their program of parish education. Several considerations prompt one to make such a broad statement. To begin with, there is a tendency for every one of us to become involved in an agency or an organization to such an extent that it becomes an end rather than a means for reaching our goal, and as a result we become completely absorbed in the administration, in particular methods, or in the number of persons involved. The formulation of objectives should take our mind off the methods and the means and direct our attention to the ultimate changes looked for in the lives of the persons under our spiritual care.

The undue stress on administration and the agencies causes us to lose sight of the educational changes in Christian growth which we want to bring about in the individual. Consequently if we, as leaders, become so involved in tools and organizations, it is understandable that congregations will follow our lead. They are led to assume those things to be important which we stress. They begin to judge the success of the parish program by our norms of large enrollments, smooth administration, and a general activity.

A second consideration for giving time to the study of objectives is that unless we have a general blueprint of the

entire task, large segments of our ministerial task may be blotted out or put in a secondary position. This imbalance is evident where there is a tendency to pit missions against education or to put the complete emphasis at the elementary level, with adult education of minor importance, if it receives any consideration at all. Fears have also been expressed that we have failed to give the proper directives for the Christian in his community life, which has resulted in the present quietistic attitude of the average Lutheran. A clear-cut set of objectives will keep the whole task of the Church before the mind of the religious educator.

Equally important for the consideration of objectives is the fact that without an over-all plan of action or set of objectives, organizations or agencies within the congregation have a tendency to compete with one another, to overlap, or even assume the attitude that theirs is the whole educational job of the congregation. If, however, a set of objectives for the parish program has been adopted and each organization within that congregation recognizes that it is to press forward toward these goals within its own limits and opportunities, the organizations will not compete with but supplement one another. For example, if the Sunday school has drawn up its objectives in the light of the general plan and if the parochial school has done the same, they will not be competitors but co-ordinating agents reaching for the same general goals, each within its own limitations and advantages.

Similarly, duplication can be avoided if each organization knows its specific sphere of activities. There can be greater co-ordination between the work done in the upper grades of the parochial school and the confirmation instruction or the program of the Walther League and that of the Bible classes.

With a set of objectives for the entire parish program of education we may hope to avoid the tendency to expect to do the entire job at the elementary level. In our elementary areas we have frequently assumed that we must not only prepare the individual for his present childhood, but also supply him with all the training for his complete adult life, the assumption being that the whole job must be done by the time he is ready to be confirmed. Realistically this is not only bad pedagogy, it is an impossible task. Because we have sometimes naively believed that we could accomplish this, we have

allowed our youth program to become secondary and our work with adults to be practically non-existent outside the Sunday morning sermon.

Thus a set of objectives for a parish program of education will assist us in keeping our ultimate goals in mind and subordinate all else, whether they be methods, agencies, or administrative problems, considering these only in the light of the goals we wish to accomplish. The objectives will help us keep the entire picture in focus lest we overlook certain God-given tasks or objectives.

That we are not accustomed to formulate objectives is seen in the fact that there is a constant stress on the organization and methods. Additional evidence is presented when pastors and teachers are asked to state their goals. The answer is usually given with a glib phrase or two or perhaps the usual Bible passages: Matt. 28:19-20: "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you"; or 2 Tim. 3:15: to make men "wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus," and sometimes verse 17 is added: "That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." While it is true that the objectives of our work will be found in these and similar passages, it is equally true that we are frequently unaware of the implications contained in such references. These Bible passages are so comprehensive that unless we investigate them in the light of the rest of the Scripture, we may fail to see all that is implied in them.

On the basis of Holy Writ, what is the educational task of the Church? It must be remembered that we are dealing with Christians in a Christian congregation. Hence we are concerned with the Christian's relationship to his God. This relationship expresses itself in a twofold sphere of living: one sphere relating to his own person, the other to society. Both of these must be reflected in the objectives which we draw up.

From the standpoint of the first sphere of living, we are concerned with the Christian's responsibility that he remain steadfast in his personal faith life, as Peter and Paul have summed it up in their exhortation: "Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Pet. 3:18)

so that the "Word of God . . . effectually worketh also in you that believe" (1 Thess. 2:13). This growth is a lifetime process without restrictions to age, time, or place.

The Christian's relationship to God includes also the second phase of living, namely, that of his social responsibility. Unto this he has been sanctified. The believer is a part of society, both the Christian and the non-Christian. He is in the world though not of it, and in this world he is to be salt and light.

Broadly speaking, God has set the individual Christian in three social areas of living. First and foremost, because of its priority and its fundamental importance, is *the home* founded by God. Secondly, there is *the Christian Church*, the Christian fellowship (ἐκκλησία). Usually we think of the local congregation when we hear this term, though it must in no wise be limited to this; strictly speaking, not even to the Lutheran Church, though this is of pre-eminent importance because of the confessional obligations. Actually, in its fullest sense, it means all Christendom, as we have been taught to pray for and with all Christians in the Lord's Prayer. Realistically viewed, we know that other considerations come into play which will restrict our objectives in practice. Thirdly, our area of social living includes *the community*, which embraces another divine agency, namely, the government, though not to be narrowed to this. Other obligations enter into this area, such as our entire mission responsibilities, which in themselves enlarge the community to such an extent that it becomes the world, for the world is our field.

These two spheres, the individual and the social, are kept separate because only in this way can we give them the consideration they require. As a matter of actual practice, the two are constantly intertwined. We do not live in two separate airtight compartments. Just as the body and soul constantly interact in the living man, so there is constant interaction between the sphere of the individual and the social. Where this interaction or pattern fails to exist, there is something fundamentally wrong with either our understanding or our Christian living.

Bearing this in mind, we can now formulate our general aim of parish education according to these two areas of living.



### I. The Individual

The indoctrination in the Scriptural truths for all members of the congregation in such a way that these truths make men grow in the knowledge of the grace of God in Christ Jesus and further their godly living (*the individual's faith life*).

### II. The Social

- A. The nurturing of individual members to build and maintain a Christian home on the basis of Scriptural principles (*the home*).
- B. The nurturing of individual members for greater participation and leadership in the work of the local congregation and of the church at large (*the church*).
- C. The nurturing of individual members in the evangelization of the community and the world at large as well as for Christian citizenship and community activities (*the community*).

Keeping these goals before us, we have a general directive for our task as parish educators. So broad is this directive that from it the unique objectives of every educational organization or agency within the parish may be drawn. Within the limitations of the spiritual and mental maturity of the individual this is true whether it is the nursery class, the Sunday sermon, the parochial school, or the adult Bible class.

### I

As they now stand, these general objectives are still too broad. Unless they are defined more specifically, large segments of our plan of action may still be blotted out. Let us begin by examining all that is implied in the first area of living, *the individual*, the Christian's responsibility to himself in his relationship to God:

*The indoctrination in the Scriptural truths for all members of the congregation in such a way that these truths make men grow in the knowledge of the grace of God in Christ Jesus and further their godly living (the individual's faith life).*

This objective falls into two natural parts, which are separated only for the purpose of studying them more closely. In the actual teaching process they dare not be separated, the one being the indoctrination, the other the functional use of these doctrines.

1. *Acquaintance with the Scriptural truths for all members of the congregation at the various stages of spiritual and mental maturity: elementary (pre-school and school age); secondary (confirmation and post-confirmation age); adult.*

The Christian Church must begin with the indoctrination of Scriptural truths. The Christian religion is unique in this respect. Its truths are not derived from reason. They do not arise spontaneously. Nor can the findings which are formulated from nature serve as basic norms. The Christian derives his saving knowledge from divine revelation. These truths, being from above, are eternal verities in contrast to the world, to which they have been revealed, which is in constant change and subject to investigation and verification. Only through these central truths can the individual grow in the knowledge of the grace of God in Christ Jesus. The individual's faith life is rounded and polished through the Word.

But this indoctrination, or, as we have called it, "acquaintance with the Scriptural truths," is not a one-time process, one that can be concentrated during the period of childhood. It is for every age from infancy to old age. While Paul tells parents to bring their children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Eph. 6:4), he tells all the members of the Colossian congregation:

"(We) do not cease to pray for you and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, that ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God" (Col. 1:9-10).

And, again:

"Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" (Col. 3:16).

So also John wrote to children, to young men, and to fathers (1 John 2:13), and this not because they were ignorant of the truth (1 John 2:21), but that their joy might be full and they would not be seduced into unbelief (1 John 2:26) and ungodly living (1 John 3:7 ff.).

The methods, the agency, the organization, and the content to accomplish this goal will vary according to the mental and spiritual maturity of the individual and according to the cir-

circumstances of the congregation. For a general view of the whole congregation, we might include at least four subdivisions, without implying that the accomplishment of these four items will fully meet the objective set forth:

#### ACQUAINTANCE WITH THE FUNDAMENTALS OF BIBLE HISTORY

The first will, no doubt, be an acquaintance with the fundamental Bible stories, or Bible history, and together with this:

#### ACQUAINTANCE WITH THE FUNDAMENTALS OF BIBLICAL DOCTRINE

Whether these two items are fused or separated in the teaching is immaterial. We are not concerned with the method involved as long as the method used actually achieves the objectives. This is important.

Along with this we might add:

#### SKILL IN HANDLING THE BIBLE

Ordinarily we might expect that this would follow from the above. Where else do we get the Bible stories and the Bible doctrine but from the Bible? But, because method has often crowded out the objectives, the use of the Bible itself has frequently been pushed into the background. The Catechisms, the lesson leaflets, the Bible history books, have too frequently been the only source of learning, so that the Book behind all these has been neglected. We have no brief against Bible helps. They have a necessary place. We must have them. We can't give a four-year-old a Bible for his lesson. A leaflet simplifies the content for him. Even adults profit from the use of guides and outlines. But when these cease to be aids and become ends in themselves, we have lost sight of our objectives in leading people directly to the Bible and training them to handle the Bible skillfully and intelligently. We can well appreciate the complaint of the Rev. Bernard I. Bell, D. D., pastor of the Episcopal Church at the University of Chicago, who bids his denomination to ponder the advisability of using Biblical material only as illustrative.

About all we get by the usual Sunday school methods is a scramble-gabble of undigested Bible stories which "puts children off" the Holy Book, and also leaves them ignorant of any religious system which they can later hang on to (*Living Church*, Feb. 15, 1948, p. 13).

Perhaps the cry about the obsolete English of the King James Version arises partly from the fact that the simplified

texts have been used too long and through this we have accustomed our people to be spoon-fed with Christian "pabulum." Several generations ago people had less general education, fewer Biblical helps; and while the King James English was just as archaic then as it is today, these people nevertheless could read the Bible more readily than the average Christian family of today.

In addition to the general acquaintance with the Scriptural truths there should also be given:

**A REPERTOIRE OF PERTINENT PORTIONS OF THE SCRIPTURES AND RELATED MATERIAL (CATECHISM AND HYMNS) FOR PERSONAL COMFORT, JOY, ASSURANCE, AND PROOF**

In considering the various specifics which might come under these aims, the general objectives should not be lost sight of. This is particularly true when considering this specific. Note, not merely a repertoire of Scripture passages for their own sake, but for personal comfort, joy, assurance, and proof, and all this to help the individual grow in the knowledge of the grace of God in Christ and, as we shall consider in a moment, to further his godly living.

Here particularly it might be well for every religious educator to consider whether he is actually achieving this goal in the assignment of his memory material, particularly with the youth of the church. Judging by many statements and observations, we might do well to re-evaluate our methods of teaching memory work. Too often the memory work becomes an end in itself. Are we giving due consideration to the readiness of the child when we ask him to memorize a selection from Holy Writ or from the Catechism? Does he understand not only the meaning, but also the purpose behind it? Is he getting an appreciation of the "what for," or is it merely blind recitation, with a minimum of understanding? Has there been an overemphasis of the proof passages for the purpose of laying low the heretics or the gainsayers, with little importance placed on the value of Bible passages for the individual's own comfort, joy, and assurance? Has all the value been stressed on the "dim future," with little or no thought for present needs? When the congregation puts its chief emphasis on the elementary level of religious education, it necessarily feels that every foreseeable problem must be anticipated while the individual is still young and that he be equipped for it. This

"last chance" attitude overlooks the fact that unless the material is put to use at the time it is learned or at an early date thereafter, the laws of memory will see to it that most of it will be forgotten when the problem actually arises sometime in the distant future.

For this reason more stress should be placed in showing a child how the passage is of value to him now and under what circumstances it can be used. This should be followed by giving him occasions to use it under such circumstances.

We recognize that if we operate with such objectives in mind, the number of our memory selections will go down, but we can also be assured that the quality, usefulness, and retention will go up.

Teaching the Scriptural truths, training for skill in handling the Bible, and memorization, no matter how well done, cannot be divorced from the functional use of these God-given facts. For this reason we have set up our objectives with this in mind: *"in such a way that these truths make men grow in the knowledge of the grace of God in Christ Jesus and further their godly living."* Hence we have set up our second broad specific to read:

2. *Functional use of these Scriptural truths in the life of the individual.*

It is here that we have somewhat fallen down on the job. We have indoctrinated, and that quite well, but often the functional use of these truths has been lacking. We often fail to see the Christian attitudes and behavior we might expect to find in the children of our schools, in the students at our synodical schools, to say nothing about the lives of our people who "know it" but do not "live it." Of course, we can piously put on blinders and refuse to see, and none is so blind as he who will not see. It is better, however, that we acknowledge the fact and investigate how the work of the Holy Spirit has been thwarted and to what degree we share in the guilt by our failure to teach properly.

The most difficult part of our teaching task will be to make Christianity function. We cannot rely upon our telling to bring about these changes. Here especially it is evident that telling is not teaching. While the Holy Spirit is effective in the Word, it is also true that we can destroy the effect of the Word by our own attitudes and behavior. We cannot get

people to love Christ by telling them to love Him. We must set before them the motivating power of Christ's love for us; we must in our own demeanor show that we, too, have been affected by that love; we must give evidence of this in a life of love lest our much telling about loving God be interpreted by our own lack of expression of it.

What are some of the Christian attitudes, habits, and behavior patterns which we wish to cultivate and nourish as far as the individual is concerned? The first which might be mentioned is

#### THE HABIT OF DAILY BIBLE READING AND PRAYER (DEVOTIONAL LIFE)

The Scriptural truths which we inculcate by our preaching must be deepened and confirmed by the Christian's own daily reading of the Bible and his prayer life. That our people are generally not reading the Bible is a fact to which we cannot close our eyes. Several studies recently made bear out this fact in an all too vivid way.

The same can be said about the prayer life, though perhaps not to the same extent. How mature, however, these prayers are; how far our people are able to get away from stereotypes is a problem that concerns many pastors and teachers and perhaps should concern them still more. It is a fact that we have not encouraged prayer by giving children, young people, and adults opportunities to pray and that we have not even taught them the essentials of a prayer through practice. Ask the average layman to lead a group in prayer, and you will have all the evidence you need. In desperation he might pray the Lord's Prayer or confess the Apostles' Creed; but to formulate a prayer arising out of the occasion and immediate needs, for this he feels inadequate. This may reflect what he does in his private devotional life, but we leave the conclusions to the religious educators.

A second item of Christian living might include:

#### APPRECIATION AND REVERENT USE OF THE DIVINE SERVICES AND THE SACRAMENTS

This means more than going to church, being baptized, and going the casual four times a year to the Lord's Supper. It also means more than merely telling people to go to church, checking up on their attendance, and being satisfied with numbers. It means that more and more stress be placed upon



the quality of the worship, which rises from an inner motive of love because of a personal union with Christ.

From this devotional life and reverent use of the means of grace comes another phase of the functional use of these Scriptural truths:

HOLY AND SACRIFICIAL LIVING ACCORDING TO GOD'S LAW AS AN  
EXPRESSION OF ONE'S PERSONAL FAITH

True, we have taught the will of God, which is the Christian's norm for a life dedicated to God, but it is equally true that it does not always function. This is not due to the fact that we have overlooked it in our objectives in the past, for surely every Christian educator has that as his goal. It is more likely that part of the solution to the problem lies in the fact that we have sometimes assumed that presenting the facts brings the results per se. As has already been said repeatedly, we must re-examine our methods to find out to what extent they have actually encouraged an intellectual Christianity instead of a functional one. More emphasis must be placed on giving our Christians direction and opportunity for expression in their sacrificial living.

II

Leaving now the area of the individual's personal responsibility as a child of God, we turn to the social phase of his responsibility. What does the teacher hope to accomplish in the individual so that he can take his place in society? We have already divided this phase of living into the home, the church, and the community. Concerning the *home* we have formulated our objective in general terms as follows:

- A. *The nurturing of individual members to build and maintain a Christian home on the basis of Scriptural principles.*

The importance of stressing the home in a program of parish education is obvious to every religious educator and need not be defended. The stress and strain of a fast-moving materialistic age has had its impact upon every home, not excluding the parsonage. The church cannot neglect this fact. It cannot, with a special measure of Pilate water, wash its hands and simply blame the home for the effects of our age, nor can it simply take over the function of the home on the assumption that the latter is a failure anyway. Because the church also has felt the impact of the age in which it exists,

it has all it can do to carry out its divinely appointed task without taking on the duty of any other agency. Instead, it must redouble its effort to assist the home in doing its own task more effectively.

Beginning before the individual has established a home of his own, the first task in this area is

#### PREPARATION FOR CHRISTIAN MARRIAGE

The basic steps for the establishment of a home are taken during childhood upon the part of both the home and the church. In our parochial schools we have perhaps done much by way of preparation and, in a limited way, also in the confirmation instruction. On the other hand, much of what we have tried to accomplish there has been premature. We have prepared children for some remote future time at an age when the felt needs were vague and for the most part wholly unrealized. During another important period of preparation, namely, that of the adolescent, we have already begun to lose contact with many, and consequently we are accomplishing still less. Considering that only about twenty-five per cent of the communicants of high school age are enrolled in Bible classes and about the same proportion in young people's societies, we realize that decisive years for this important phase of preparation are lost for the majority. An interesting question to consider here is: Are we losing our hold on these children because it's a hopeless task, or because we have not offered them what they felt they needed as young Christians, or because we took the attitude that we had given them all the necessary instruction before confirmation and that consequently young people's activities are at best a preventative measure to keep them away from worldly associations as much as possible? Whatever the reason may be, we cannot even approximate this objective if the young people are not with us for such instruction. What is true of the young adolescent is even more true of the older adolescent, who may already be in the period of courtship.

The next phase of this objective is:

#### THE ABILITY OF PARENTS TO BRING UP THEIR CHILDREN IN THE NURTURE OF THE LORD

Training for parenthood is no less important than education preparing for marriage. Perhaps the only difference is

that young parents, for the most part, are aware of their needs and more eagerly turn to the church for help when and if it is offered. Here, too, the necessary assistance is often lacking. This portion of the church's task is one of the several items overlooked in the program of parish education. As with other phases of our work, this is partly due to the fact that we are overconfident in the success of our elementary Christian education, believing that we have given them the foundation and all these things shall in some mysterious way be added unto them.

#### THE PROPER RELATION OF CHILDREN TO THEIR PARENTS

Much stress has been placed upon this phase of Christian living in the home, for it has always been recognized as the important area of Christian life. Since our major emphasis in our parish program has been centered in the child, and that at a time when these problems are real and within the learner's experience, this objective has rarely been lost sight of.

#### THE ART OF CHRISTIAN LIVING IN THE HOME

The proper relationship between husband and wife, brothers and sisters, toward in-laws, grandparents, and anyone else that might live under the family roof is all within this sphere of Christian living.

Another important phase of home education is

#### THE PROPER USE OF LEISURE TIME BY ALL MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY

This includes the responsibility of helping the family in its play to help make it a well-knit unit. In our highly organized life, where the members of the family are often strangers to one another, where the church, too, has helped keep them apart with its long array of meetings, some thought should be given to allowing them to spend evenings together at home and assist them in achieving to some degree a mutual understanding between members of the family.

The second major area of living in our social relationship is, of course, the *church*. Here our objective is

- B. *The nurturing of individual members for greater participation and leadership in the work of the local congregation and of the church at large.*

To achieve this objective, no fewer than the following five specifics should be included:

1. *Acquaintance of the individual members with the work of the congregation, Synod, and the church at large, with a view to greater participation in this work.*
2. *Leadership training for the activities of the congregation and the Church (administration, education, missions, charity, etc.).*
3. *A sense of stewardship in cheerful and proportionate giving.*
4. *Acquaintance with, and appreciation of, the history of the Church, including that of the local congregation.*
5. *An understanding and appreciation of the liturgical heritage of the Church.*

With the possible exception of the last item, the church has, for the most part, been aware of these objectives and has made a concerted effort to achieve them. What restrictions these aims have received has been due chiefly to the fact that we have not stressed our adult program of parish education as we might have and consequently have not achieved the success we had reason to expect. This is particularly true of our leadership training. Though we have one of the finest elementary programs of education, strangely enough it has not produced a lay leadership. This is particularly true of leaders for Bible classes. While all denominations feel this lack, many have been able to train lay leaders for Bible classes in spite of their meager program at the elementary level. Are we hesitant to use our laymen, lacking confidence in the foundational training which we have given them, or have we failed to make active laymen? Great strides have been made in administration, but there is still a woeful lack of lay leadership for an adult program.

As to the last specific in the five steps outlined above, *the understanding and appreciation of the liturgical heritage of the Church*, we have been strangely remiss. A liturgical Church with a laity that rarely understands the meaning of the order of services which it uses at every public worship! Whatever beauty and meaning lies in the liturgical form of worship, it is lost upon a membership that has completely formalized the service. Unless checked, we are only encouraging dead formalism in our public worship, from which even the public preaching is bound to suffer.

The last major area of social living is the *community*. We have stated this objective thus:

- C. *The nurturing of individual members in the evangelization of the community and the world at large as well as for Christian citizenship and community activities.*

This objective falls into two natural phases of activity: evangelism and Christian citizenship.

### 1. *Evangelism*

Our Church has from its beginning been interested in mission work but on account of a number of circumstances has greatly restricted it according to nationalistic lines. This work has often been merely salvaging souls rather than mission work as we understand the term today. Since World War I we have become more aware of our responsibilities to the rank-and-file citizen regardless of his nationality. Thanks to the active work of our Home Missions Board this phase of our work has entered upon a more concerted activity than has ever been attempted before. In view of this we have had clearly set before us the various steps necessary to achieve this objective. They may be summarily formulated as follows:

A SENSITIVENESS IN THE MINDS OF THE INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS TO THE NEEDS OF THE MANY UNCHURCHED.

A TRAINED MEMBERSHIP FOR PERSONAL MISSION WORK IN THIS COMMUNITY.

PARTICIPATION IN THE CHURCH'S MISSION PROGRAM IN THE WORLD AT LARGE (HOME AND FOREIGN MISSIONS).

USE OF THE EDUCATIONAL AGENCIES WITHIN THE CONGREGATION TO WIN THE UNCHURCHED IN THE COMMUNITY.

ACQUAINTANCE WITH THE HISTORY OF MISSIONS AND THE WORK OF OUR CHURCH IN THE VARIOUS MISSION FIELDS.

### 2. *Christian Citizenship*

The second phase of the Christian's community life, namely, Christian citizenship, is one of the areas which has sometimes been blotted out entirely. Various reasons have been ascribed to our Lutheran quietism. Some say it is because we fear that it may lead to preaching the social gospel; others, because we fear mixing Church and State; still others, because we fear contamination with the sinful practices of the world, suggesting in effect a Lutheran type of monasticism; and with still others it simply is an outgrowth of our foreign background. That some of these dangers are real must be readily admitted, but they do not absolve us from the many

admonitions in Scriptures to let our light shine, to be the salt of the earth (Matt. 5: 13-16), to do good to all men (Gal. 6: 10), in Christ's name to bring food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, hospitality to the homeless, clothing to the ragged, comfort to the sick, and cheer to the imprisoned, regardless of whether they are of the household of faith or not (Matt. 25: 31-46), to seek the peace of the city (Jer. 29: 7), and to render to the government "all their dues" (Rom. 13: 7). Considering these instructions of the Holy Spirit, we may break them down to at least four specifics:

AN INTEREST IN THE WELFARE OF THE COMMUNITY BY PARTICIPATION  
IN SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

No one will challenge the statement that at least in some phases of this specific we have failed. One cannot but be reminded that we have not encouraged our members to take their place in the political life of the community. By and large, Lutherans have not made the impact upon American society which they should have made. We pastors particularly have often discouraged our people from taking an active political interest for fear that they might become soiled by the corruption of American politics. Is this some more evidence to lead us to believe that we lack confidence in the power of the Gospel and in the effectiveness of our own educational program? In a democracy a Christian certainly has the duty to identify himself with the State if the opportunity affords itself and thus spread effectively his "saltiness" and the power of his "light" in an otherwise dark and corrupt world.

The same may be said for encouraging our laity to participate in the charitable, cultural, and educational endeavors of the community and thus by their singular Christian philosophy of life bring men "to glorify their Father which is in heaven."

Another important objective in this area of living is

THE REALIZATION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF PRAYERFUL USE OF THE  
RIGHTS OF SUFFRAGE

Not all our members can enter politics, but every adult member possessing the right of suffrage should be impressed with the sacred responsibility to use it in a prayerful manner. In a democracy the people are the government. On election day we make our selection of those whom we want to employ



as our representatives. Ours is the responsibility of every employer to get the best man for the job. We cannot, by default, allow only a part of the citizenry to choose. This is a sinful neglect of the Fourth Commandment, particularly when considered in the light of Romans 13. Yet we have been careless in the use of our voting rights, and we have too often failed to instruct our people to use their vote prayerfully in the light of their own Christian understanding of the issues involved.

#### LOYAL CITIZENSHIP

This is the next phase of the Christian's life in the community which needs emphasis. By this we include all that a Christian should do as a thoughtful law-abiding citizen, whether he is enjoying the great outdoors or the city parks, sitting behind the wheel of a car as he spins along the highways, or doing such a prosaic thing as paying his taxes. The Christian is a loyal citizen in peace as well as in war.

The final phases of the Christian's activity in the community should include

#### LOVE AND SYMPATHETIC UNDERSTANDING TOWARD PERSONS OF OTHER RACES, NATIONALITIES, AND RELIGIOUS CONVICTIONS

A Christian, above all, should strive to free himself from prejudices of every kind. We who recognize that there is one God who is over all; that we are one people through Adam; that all were destroyed in the same sin and are in the same condemnation; that all in like manner were redeemed by the same Savior through the same free grace; and that Christians adore the same Spirit who would have all men come to the knowledge of the truth, we Christians should be singularly free from prejudices. We know that prejudices are prejudgments caused by our failure to view all the facts. When persons are involved in our prejudice, it is a violation of the Eighth Commandment, which every Christian must try to shun.

The stereotypes of our literature, movies, and radios which make every Negro either a shuffling, drawling lackey or a dangerous rapist; every Italian a fruit peddler or a thug; every Irishman a policeman or a ward heeler; every German a jolly fool or a cold, cruel, calculating sadist; every Chinaman a laundryman or a knife-wielding tong leader; every Mexican a gay Don Juan or a sneak thief; every Jew a cheat or an in-

ternational banker, and so ad nauseam, all these feed our prejudices and prevent us from exercising our love and from having a sympathetic understanding of their problems and obstacles. For we must not only strive to free ourselves from prejudice, but ours must be a dynamic Christian love, which rises higher than a mere toleration of our fellow man.

Perhaps something needs to be said about those of other religious convictions, too. It is hard for us to separate the individual and his beliefs. Because a person may not be a Christian, or if a Christian, then not a Lutheran; or if a Lutheran, then not of the Synodical Conference, we have often left the impression that we must all but outlaw the individual in our community contacts. While we cannot tolerate error where Scripture clearly points to the truth, we must show our Christian love to all men. Where the opportunity affords itself, we will bear witness by word and, certainly, by Christian deeds of our own regenerated life. Too often incivility and downright bad manners are practiced under the guise of Christian love and confessionalism.

This, then, is the blueprint spread before us, the objectives of a full program of parish education. It is a big task that cannot be crammed into any single agency nor assigned to any one period of life. It is a lifelong program, with effort placed at every level of a person's life. It calls for a program for the child, the youth, and the adult. Out of it should grow the specific objectives of every educational agency in the church to assure proper co-ordination and the avoidance of any large gaps in the program of the parish. Through it the union of the Christian with his God is more firmly grounded as he grows in the knowledge of the truth, and by it he effects God's purpose in justifying us, for "we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:10).



# Brief Studies in the Prophets

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## III HOLY WEEK

Zech. 9:9; 11:12-13; 13:7; 12:10

In our first article on the Prophet Zechariah we spoke in general of his person and his book. We dwelt, furthermore, on a particularly beautiful and significant symbolical action, the crowning of the Priest-King, a clear prophecy of the Messiah. In the present article we shall briefly consider four other Messianic prophecies found in the third section of the book. These prophecies lend to the entire work a special character.

### Zech. 9:9

In the Book of Zechariah we find prophecies dealing with the events of Palm Sunday, of Maundy Thursday, and of Good Friday. The first passage to which we shall direct our attention, 9:9, was fulfilled at the beginning of Holy Week, that is, on Palm Sunday. Literally translated, it reads: "Rejoice greatly, daughter Zion; exult, daughter Jerusalem; behold, thy King will come to thee; righteous and full of salvation is He, lowly and riding upon an ass, indeed, upon a colt, a young of a she-ass." This prophecy appears in the midst of promises dealing with contemporary history, as is frequently the case in the Prophets. In the section immediately preceding it, God promises His people aid, and this aid now comes to the people through the arrival of its King. Since this is such a great and wonderful act of salvation, Jehovah calls upon Zion and Jerusalem to rejoice: "Rejoice, and that greatly." The Hebrew term for "rejoice" literally means "to be noisy," as a result of joy. "Daughter of Zion" are the inhabitants of Jerusalem, as the immediately following sentence states: "exult, daughter Jerusalem." And Jerusalem's inhabitants represent the entire people Israel. Strictly speaking, however, the Prophet has in mind the believing members of the people of the covenant, the "remnant," the true Israel, which yearns for the Messiah. The reason for the exultation is that He who has been longed for so long is now coming.

He is already before the gate. The expression "behold" seeks especially to rouse the attention. "*Your*" King comes, says the Prophet. Not a foreign ruler is He, but He who is destined for His Church and promised to the people of the covenant. And this King comes *for you*, that is, not only to you, but at the same time also for your benefit. That David's son, the Messiah, is meant by this King, cannot be doubtful in the light of the previous prophecies, and is rather generally admitted. And then this King is further portrayed and His coming described. The first two expressions refer to His relation to Jehovah. He is just, in the fullest sense of the word, holy, without sin, without fault and blemish. He further has salvation. The Vulgate renders the words of the original Hebrew by "*Salvator*," Luther by "*Helfer*," but linguistically neither can be defended. The exact meaning is: endowed and vested by God "with salvation," or "help," as the English Bible renders it: "having salvation." And since He is thus equipped, He brings salvation and help with Him, and thus Luther's translation in the end hits the correct sense. The two following expressions then describe the character of this King's rule: He is poor and lowly. His objective is not a rule characterized by power, but His poverty and lowliness guarantee that He will condescend to the lowly and wretched. For this reason He rides upon an ass, more specifically, a colt of an ass, i. e., a young animal not previously used for riding. And then, to emphasize this fact still more, the text adds, "a foal of an ass." This method of expression is very picturesque and lays emphasis on the fact that it is an ass upon which He rides, and not a horse. The horse is generally the animal on which kings ride, especially in war; the ass, on the other hand, is the animal used for peaceful purposes. As the Prince of Peace, who brings the peace of God, as v. 10 immediately proceeds to emphasize, this King rides upon the animal typical of peace and thereby shows His peaceful intent, His condescension, and His lowliness. He does not intend to establish an earthly, glorious empire of the Messiah, for the ass is at the same time a more lowly animal than the horse, neither as strong nor as swift as the latter.

Every Bible reader is familiar with the fact that the New Testament quotes this passage as literally fulfilled at the entrance of Jesus into Jerusalem. All four Evangelists note

this fact. Especially important is Matthew 21. There not only the colt of an ass is mentioned, but also the she-ass herself, although Jesus, of course, rode on only one of the two, namely, on the foal. However, the she-ass is to follow along in order to fulfill Zechariah's prophecy to the letter. Literally translated, the Matthew passage reads as Moffatt has translated it: "Mounted on an ass and on a colt, the foal of a beast of burden." Thus our passage in Zechariah is important particularly for Messianic prophecy in general. A very special item is announced in advance, one which at the first glance does not appear so very important, but which nevertheless was fulfilled most accurately.

It is true that according to the entire context also the beautiful and rich verses 10 and 11 belong to this Messianic passage. However, we can not enter upon a discussion of these at the present time. Besides, they are not explicitly quoted in the New Testament.

#### Zech. 11:12-13

We pass on to Thursday of Holy Week. Of this day Zechariah prophesies in 11:12-13: "And I said unto them, If it seems good to you, give My price; and if not, forbear! So they weighed for My price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter; a goodly price that I was prized at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver and cast them in the house of the Lord unto the potter." Though the Prophet is speaking, he throughout these verses represents Jehovah. It is true that this passage offers greater difficulties than the preceding. Though we cannot discuss them here in detail, the main facts nevertheless are clear and plain. The theme of the entire section is: "The Good Shepherd of Israel over against the evil, wicked shepherds," and the verses which we are now considering show how disgracefully His own people treats the Good Shepherd. He here asks for His reward from them, and this request ought to move His flock to make a declaration whether they recognize and appreciate the care of their Good Shepherd. That lies in the words, "If it seems good to you," or literally, "If it is good in your eyes." He is not concerned with the reward itself. To that He attaches no importance, but He is concerned about a declaration whether His sheep prize His service and de-

sire its continuation. Up to the present time the flock has failed to give this reward. According to the context, it had become surfeited with its Shepherd. What reward the flock owed its Shepherd for His work is indicated by the nature of the case. It was humble obedience, heartfelt and grateful love, or, as one may also express it, repentance and faith, true piety of heart. That is the only return that man can give to God. The flock, indeed, makes a return to the Shepherd, but what sort of one! They weighed out thirty pieces of silver, that is, thirty shekels of silver. The noted exegete Hengstenberg makes this striking comment: "*Statt Lohn, bieten sie ihm Hohn.*" "Instead of reward they offer Him scorn." Thirty pieces of silver are such a paltry sum that offering them is more insulting than utter refusal if one considers who it was that served them and what sort of service He rendered the flock. They show thereby that they hold the services of the Shepherd in low esteem, for, according to Ex. 21:32, thirty pieces of silver were the compensation for a slain slave. They were, accordingly, the price for which one could purchase a slave. The flock indicates thereby that they do not value the service of the Good Shepherd higher than the labor of any purchased slave. It was not only an inappropriate reward and a disproportionately low one, but it was a contemptuous reward. And for this reason Jehovah tells the Prophet, who represents Him: "Cast it unto the potter, the goodly price that I was prized by them." By offering this reward the flock indicated its estimate of the service which Jehovah had rendered it, in fact, its estimate of Jehovah Himself, whose representative the Prophet is. And for this reason Jehovah designates this price of thirty pieces of silver as a "goodly price" in holy irony. He commands the Prophet not to retain this ridiculous sum, but to cast it unto the potter. The expression "cast" is used contemptuously, since the reward is such an outrageous one that they have not offered it to anyone else except to their God. The term denotes as much as "throw down at one," or "to throw away at one." But what is the meaning of "unto the potter"? This is a much-discussed, difficult statement. In his *Kurzgefasster Handkommentar zum A. T.*, Nowack remarks: "What is to be understood by the potter is entirely unclear." This, however, is an overstatement. The context makes it clear that the phrase has refer-



ence to a contemptuous treatment of the money involved. For that reason the meaning of the statement is not, as some would have it, "Throw it to the treasurer of the Temple," or "Place it in the treasury of the Temple." Neither does it mean, as others understand it, "Throw it into the furnace, to the goldsmith." Nor does it mean, "Throw it on the dump" or "into the dirt." Nor is the meaning, "Throw it towards the potter," as though this were a proverbial statement to designate bad treatment. All these various assumptions do not satisfy. We can only say that the prophecy itself for the time being does not give any explanation for the words, "unto the potter." It is left to the fulfillment to throw the proper light upon the proceedings. Only the fulfillment has removed the veil from these words. As so often, we must here also recognize and wonder at the miraculous dispensations of God.

The Prophet carried out God's command. He cast the price to the potter in the house of the Lord. These simple clear words can mean only that the potter, when the money was thrown to him, was in the house of Jehovah or that the price was brought from there to the potter. This circumstance was significant. It shows that the Prophet does everything in the name of Jehovah, and according to Jehovah's command he does not retain the money. The Temple comes into consideration as the place where the people appear before their God. What is done there is done before the face of God. It is there that the ridiculous price is cast to the potter, the great ingratitude of the people is thereby brought before the face of God, and God is, as it were, challenged to demand an accounting from this people. And from the Temple then the money came to the potter.

But now comes the miraculous fulfillment. In Matt. 27: 9-10 the passage is applied to the betrayal of Christ by Judas Iscariot. It is there stated that the repentant Judas brought the thirty pieces of silver into the Temple, but that the high priests refused to place this blood money into the Temple treasury. Instead they purchased with it the potter's field, which thenceforth was called "the Field of Blood." And it is expressly stated: "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the Prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of Him that was valued, whom they of the

children of Israel did value; and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me." However, one must not overlook the fact that, as so often in the prophecies, the time interval is disregarded; that the Prophet starts out from the present and prophesies something that lies in the future; that the Prophet speaks of himself in the first person, when actually Jehovah, or still more accurately Christ, is the speaker; and that the symbolical action which the Prophet here performs denotes a fact of the New Testament. Let us keep firmly in mind that in the verses of Zechariah which we are considering the Prophet's speech directly passes over into the words of the Messiah. The Messiah appears here, as is repeatedly the case in the prophecies, as the Shepherd of the people. He has faithfully tended His flock; He has rescued it from the wicked shepherds, even before His appearance in the flesh, as the Angel of the Lord, in whom Jehovah reveals Himself and through whom He acts who Himself is Jehovah. But the people had become weary of His functioning as their Shepherd, they paid Him off with thirty pieces of silver and thereby despised and rejected their God and their Lord. From the New Testament we now know how this was fulfilled in a most noteworthy and miraculous manner. It is true that the quotation in the Gospel according to St. Matthew is a so-called free quotation, with some differences and difficulties, which, however, can be solved in an entirely satisfactory manner. Especially our passage in Zechariah is very instructive for the proper understanding of prophecy and fulfillment. "*Novum Testamentum in Vetere latet, Vetus Testamentum in Novo patet.*" "The New Testament is concealed in the Old, the Old Testament is revealed in the New." We can see here how an obscure statement in the Old Testament, namely, the expression "potter," receives light from the New Testament and how an event which was in itself unimportant represented the fulfillment of God's counsel and foreknowledge. We realize from Matthew's report that the high priests in their entire procedure acted in this instance in the name of the people. Just as the payment of the price to the Shepherd in the Book of Zechariah was an evidence of the blackest ingratitude for His faithful service and a proof of their hardening themselves against His acts of love, so also the same horrible ingratitude reveals itself in the decision of the Sanhedrin to put Jesus,

their Messiah and Savior, to death and to bring Him into their power by means of thirty paltry pieces of silver. This money was actually the price which the Jewish people paid Jesus for His works of salvation. The small, wretched sum which they gave was a proof of their contempt for Jesus. Everyone who compares this prophecy and its fulfillment must acknowledge that the same God who spoke through the Prophets guided the events in such a manner that His prophecy had to be fulfilled, that Judas had to cast the blood money into the Temple before the face of God in order to call down God's vengeance upon the people, and that the high priests through the purchase of the potter's field, the Field of Blood, had to commemorate forever their sacrilege against their Messiah and Savior.

But what is the situation with respect to the quotation in the Gospel according to St. Matthew? So far we have referred only to Zechariah and have pointed out the fulfillment of the words in the history of Jesus' Passion. St. Matthew, however, does not trace the quotation back to Zechariah, but to Jeremiah. As a result, sundry charges have been raised against the inerrancy of the Holy Scriptures. Particularly the more modern interpreters without further ado here assume an error. They simply regard the name "Jeremiah" as erroneous and make hardly any effort to solve the difficulty. Even the otherwise excellent Keil in his commentary uses the term "lapse of memory." Also in the Lutheran Church in America, in connection with discussions regarding the inerrancy of Scripture, this passage has been adduced as a proof that the Scriptures are not inerrant in nonessentials. It is our conviction, even though we cannot solve the difficulty, that Calov, the best Lutheran exegete of the seventeenth century, made a correct statement when he said in regard to this matter: "*Nullus error vel in leviculis, nullus memoriae lapsus, nedum mendacium, ullum locum habere potest in universa Scriptura sacra.*" "No error, even in trivial matters; no lapse of memory, not to speak of an untruth, can have any place in the entire Scriptures." The capable dogmatician and exegete of the nineteenth century F. A. Philippi, in spite of the fact that he first stated that he would not like to make such a declaration *a priori*, nevertheless later on admitted that this statement by Calov was correct and had to be maintained.

I have reasons to assume that it was especially the witness of Dr. Walther and of the Missouri Synod which moved him to take this stand. Scripture makes the claim, "Thy Word is true from the beginning," Ps. 119:160, or, more accurately according to the original Hebrew, "The sum of Thy Word is truth" (*American Revised Version*). Literally, the original has, "The head of Thy Word is truth." To understand the expression, we must keep in mind that the Hebrews, in carrying out an addition, placed the sum not at the foot of the column, as we do, but above it, at its head. Even when there is a difficulty in the Scriptures which we cannot solve, we hold *a priori* that no error is possible in them, not even in so-called nonessentials and insignificant matters.

However, our modern exegetes should have studied the passage in Matthew more accurately before they raised their charge against the Scriptures. Every reader of the Bible, and everyone who up to this point has followed our brief presentation, recognizes that one important item in the account of the fulfillment of the prophecy is not at all mentioned in the Book of Zechariah. Zechariah mentions only two items, the sale for thirty pieces of silver and the expression "to the potter in the Temple." The extremely important third idea of the "field" is entirely lacking. Yet in the narrative of the fulfillment according to the Gospel of St. Matthew this very term occupies the chief position, since we read that with the thirty pieces of silver a potter's field was purchased and that this potter's field was still in use as a burial ground for pilgrims at the time when the Gospel according to St. Matthew was written, i.e., thirty or forty years after the event. This cannot and dare not be simply ignored. Even correcting Jeremiah in the Gospel according to St. Matthew and replacing the name by Zechariah does not remove the difficulty. Nor is it solved by the argument that the abbreviations Zov (Ζῶν) and Iov (Ἰῶν) were confused. Where is the mention of the field? Sober-minded interpreters of the Scriptures, and in particular Dr. Stoeckhardt, have called attention to the fact that we are here evidently dealing with the combination of two passages from the Old Testament and that this composite prophecy is then assigned to one single writer, namely, to Jeremiah. If we now turn to the Prophet Jeremiah, we find that Jeremiah as a sign of the return of the Jewish people from Babylon

had to perform a symbolical action, namely, the purchase of a field, chapter 32. In this symbolical action the Holy Spirit, who in the Old Testament has in mind also the New Testament era, referred to the fact that in the remote future there would also be purchased a special field which would have significance for the history of Christ. Accordingly, Matthew ought really to have mentioned two Prophets, Zechariah and Jeremiah. Only then do we get a complete and clear picture of the Old Testament prophecy. It is not the case, however, that both Prophets are mentioned; nor do we find, as on other occasions, the plural: there was fulfilled what is said by "the Prophets," but the two passages are assigned to only one writer.

However, one may say, "How is this possible?" If we had only this one single example, we would have to be satisfied to say that the Holy Spirit proceeds with His Word as He pleases, and He inspires the holy writers according to His wisdom and His pleasure. He is not bound by the laws of our human manner of quoting. However, this is not the only instance. We cannot now go into the matter in great detail, but we refer merely to one very clear example, namely, Mark 1:2-3. There a quotation is introduced by the words, "As it is written in the Prophets" (plural), just as we read in Matt. 2:23 about Jesus' dwelling in the city of Nazareth: "That it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Prophets (plural): He shall be called a Nazarene." However, in the Gospel according to St. Mark, "in the Prophets" is, as a glance into a good modern edition of the Greek New Testament shows, not the correct reading, but a correction introduced by a later copyist in the interest of harmonizing the text. The correct reading is, "As is written in the Prophet Isaiah." And then there does not immediately follow the utterance of Isaiah which we find in v. 3, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make His paths straight," but there first comes a quotation from the Prophet Malachi: "Behold, I send My messenger before Thy face which shall prepare Thy way before Thee." Although there are two prophetic utterances involved, and although the utterance of Malachi stands first, we nevertheless read, "As it is written in the Prophet Isaiah." We have here, as has been correctly stated, a combined prophecy which is assigned to



one single writer, and Dr. Stoeckhardt, so far as I know, was the first to coin the correct expression for the phenomenon: the complex character of the prophecies. It is true that one difficulty remains with this explanation. The Jewish Christian reader, whom Matthew keeps in mind in his Gospel, certainly knew that Jeremiah says nothing about the thirty pieces of silver and yet the Evangelist mentions this Prophet. However, in such situations there remain also elsewhere difficulties in the Scriptures which we cannot explain or solve. Naturally, this entire difficulty was noticed not only in modern times, but has been taken note of by Christian interpreters of old. Luther in his characteristic manner declares: "Here the holy writers bother themselves, and Jerome raises the question why the evangelist Matthew had introduced this testimony as though it were from Jeremiah, although it is nowhere found in Jeremiah, but in this prophet Zechariah. I have this to answer in brief: The evangelists are in the habit of quoting the testimonies of the prophets not word for word, but only to reproduce their sense, something which also Matthew does in the instance of the passage which is found above in the ninth chapter, v. 9, where the prophet spoke thus: 'Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem, etc.' Matthew quotes this in the following manner: 'Tell ye the daughter Sion: Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, etc.,' Matt. 21: 5, which words are entirely different, yet there is no alteration of the meaning. Furthermore, Matthew (27: 9) also added the words, 'of the children of Israel' (something which is not found in the prophet) for the purpose of explaining the selling and buying, and of recalling that it was done by the children of Israel. Furthermore, in regard to his quotation as though it were from Jeremiah, I have nothing else that I can answer than the well-known statement, that the prophet perhaps had two names, or that he quoted in a very general way, irrespective of the name of the prophet, after the manner which is also found in the other evangelists. Augustine deals with this matter in detail, to whom you may refer. I should not readily believe that the books of the prophets were confused by a change of the titles. Furthermore, there were with Matthew, without a doubt, holy and learned men, full of the Holy Spirit, who reminded him that this Scripture passage which he had quoted was found in



Zechariah and not in Jeremiah. In response to their reminder he could have readily improved this slight error if he had so desired, or if he had been of the opinion that it was a matter of great importance. However, there is no reason why we should fearsomely trouble ourselves with these and similar concerns, since in these matters does not lie the chief part and substance of our faith. Those men are extremely foolish who trouble themselves with such unnecessary matters, something upon which the prophets of our time are intent, and solely at that, when they read the Scriptures for the purpose of discovering passages which may furnish cause and material for controversies and wrangling. Meanwhile, they disregard the chief parts of religion, although above all other things they ought to do this one thing, teach Christ, who rules. This all the apostles do of one accord, who everywhere teach the mystery of the suffering and resurrection of Christ, as though they had forgotten all the other miracles and deeds of Christ," etc. (Walch, Vol. XIV: 2123—2125.)

#### Zech. 13: 7

Another of Zechariah's prophecies which was fulfilled during Holy Week we find in 13:7: "Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the Man who is My Fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts; smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered; and I will turn Mine hand upon the little ones." In these words there is likewise prophesied an occurrence on Thursday of Holy Week, whose final fulfillment did not take place till after the resurrection of the Lord. Jehovah of Hosts is speaking, the mighty, majestic God, and, to begin with, He summons the sword as a living, personal power. It should rise from the rest which it has maintained hitherto and prove itself a sword, i. e., strike. This command to the sword is a poetic expression intended to express the thought that the striking takes place according to God's will. The sword is to start out against My Shepherd. Since Jehovah is the speaker, it is the Shepherd of Jehovah who is meant, the Shepherd who belongs to Jehovah. Yet it is improper to conclude from this summons that He is sinful and displeasing to Jehovah and that Jehovah is angry at Him. There may be other reasons which may have induced Jehovah to strike, as in the case of His Servant, Is. 53:10: "Yet it pleased the

Lord to bruise Him." In what respect the Shepherd is here called Jehovah's Shepherd is indicated by the parallel addition: "against the Man that is My Fellow." The term "man," *geber* in Hebrew, does not, as elsewhere, refer to the special position of the *man* particularly, but conveys the idea of human being. And besides, there is the addition, "man of My association." This expression, which occurs repeatedly in the Old Testament, is equivalent to "fellow," as we have it in the compound "fellow servant," or to "neighbor," synonymous with "brother." This Shepherd, therefore, cannot be a wicked shepherd who is displeasing to God and destroys the herd, perhaps the foolish shepherd mentioned 11:15-17. Neither can it be a merely human shepherd, as though the expression referred only to the calling and position common to both: a shepherd of the people; a hired or purchased servant no one would call his fellow. The Hebrew word *amithi* designates such as are united by a common physical or spiritual descent; it designates a union which is not established at will, but into which one is born. And when this term is applied to God, it designates One who is joined with God by unity of essence, who therefore is not merely a human being, but partakes of the divine nature. The Shepherd, the Fellow of Jehovah, is therefore no one else than the Messiah, who is further identified with Jehovah in the parallel passage 12:10, to which we shall immediately direct our attention. He is the Good Shepherd of Ezekiel and of the Gospel according to St. John, who is one with the Father, Ezek. 34:11-16:23; John 10: 12-16, 27-30. This interpretation receives a mighty support in the New Testament, for Matthew and Mark in their account of the passage apply this statement to Jesus of Nazareth. The sword is now ordered to strike this Shepherd. It comes into consideration only as an instrument of slaying without indicating with more detail the manner of the death. It is the usual instrument in the hand of the judge and of the warrior and repeatedly stands for any destroying or killing weapon. The smiting of the Shepherd is mentioned here merely to portray the consequence which results therefrom for the herd, namely, that the sheep will scatter. They are exposed to the misery and destruction to which a herd deprived of its shepherd is subject. The many passages of Scripture in which a human being's deed, even though it is wrong

and even wicked in itself, results in good, serve to clear up the meaning of the entire statement. Such a deed is therefore not only permitted by God, but is taken into His counsel and His foreknowledge. Jehovah Himself brings about the slaying of the Messiah. "Smite" represents the execution of a divine command in order that God through the death of the Shepherd might bring about the salvation of Israel and the salvation of the entire world. It is true that here the slaying of the Shepherd first appears as a misfortune, a misfortune indeed for the herd which it caused for itself: it scatters. But Jehovah does not intend to withdraw His hand entirely from the herd which is scattering, but will turn His hand upon the little ones. Literally, the expression is: to bring back upon one the hand which one had taken away from someone, i. e., to again make someone the object of one's activity. This may have a double meaning. Either it has reference to an act of punishment or to an act of salvation. According to the entire context, the expression is here to be understood not of inflicting punishment, but of an act of grace, of salvation. The "little ones" signifies small people in a figurative sense of the word: the wretched. They are therefore not identical with the entire herd, but form merely a part of it. God will prepare a different destiny for them than for the scattered whole.

The fulfillment of this word is clearly shown in the New Testament, Matt. 26:31-32; Mark 14:27-28, with the introductory words "For it is written." The quotation, however, is a free one. The imperative "smite" is changed into the future, "I will smite," and it refers to the fact that the disciples were offended when Jesus was taken captive, the time when all fled. That was the beginning of the scattering of the flock at the death of Christ and continued even later on in the case of Thomas and of the two disciples on the way to Emmaus. However, also the second part of the prophecy was fulfilled. "The Lord turned His hand back over the little ones," He helpfully took care of the fearful and scattered, assembled them again, and resumed His office of Shepherd. He did not remain in death, but He rose again, repeatedly appeared to them, and went before them into Galilee, as Matthew and Mark expressly state: "But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee," and so gathered them and made them recipients of His grace.

## Zech. 12:10

Finally, one more event of Holy Week, in particular of Good Friday, is prophesied by Zechariah, 12:10: "And I will pour upon the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon Me, whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for Him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for Him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born." These words state that Jehovah will do yet more for His people than has been stated so far, for this passage follows Zechariah's prophecy about the betrayal and the sale for thirty pieces of silver, but precedes the passage which was last discussed and which deals with the smiting of the Shepherd and the scattering of the herd. By pouring out the Spirit of His grace upon His people the Lord will bring it to a knowledge of its guilt which it has brought upon itself by casting aside the Messiah, so that it will sincerely repent of this sin and come to a point where it will look in faith upon its Savior. In the same manner as God, according to the entire context, will deliver His people from its physical oppression, so He will also deliver it from its inner distress, from the trouble of sin and its guilt. To this end two things are necessary. Man must first recognize the guilt of his sin and repent, and then it must be forgiven. Neither of these can he bring about by his own strength. God must do both, and He will. For that reason Jehovah here promises that He will pour out His Spirit over the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, i. e., the members of the people of the Old Covenant. This prophecy particularly points back to such ancient prophetic passages as Joel 3:1 (2:28 in the King James Version): "I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh," and Is. 44:3: "I will pour My Spirit upon thy seed and My blessing upon thine offspring." Thereby Zechariah already directs our attention to the fact that we are here dealing with a prophecy concerning the Messianic era. We shall see later on that the fulfillment of our passage also in another respect coincides with the fulfillment of the passage in Joel. To explain the communication of the Spirit, the Prophet employs the verb "pour out," because the communication takes place from the outside, and that which is communicated is, as it were, a fluid which is intended to spread out over him to whom it is

given in rich measure, to penetrate into him, and permeate him completely. Joel and Isaiah speak of the Spirit of Jehovah, the Spirit of Christ in general: "I will pour out My Spirit." In Zechariah we have: "The Spirit of grace and of supplications." The Spirit of grace is the Spirit who brings with Him the divine grace which human beings need for the forgiveness of their great guilt. Ultimately the Spirit of grace is the grace of God itself. And this experience of divine grace brings about a seeking for grace on the part of the human being: recognition of his great sin and the request for forgiveness. A further effect of this new Spirit which has been poured out is this, that they, the inhabitants of Jerusalem and the house of David, conscience-stricken, will "look upon Me." This verb is used both of physical and spiritual looking that centers with confidence upon the object viewed; compare, for instance, what is said Num. 21:8-9 in connection with the brazen serpent. It includes a humble, repentant looking, a petition for mercy on account of the wicked deed which is at once named. But it is very striking that the Prophet says: "They will look upon *Me*, whom they have pierced." The speaker is Jehovah, the Creator of heaven and earth, and of Him it is said that the Jews have pierced Him. How can a piercing of Jehovah be predicated, since God is invisible and a spirit and therefore cannot be pierced? Without entering upon the various interpretations, we shall at once give the correct solution of the difficulty. What is here said is said of the slaying of the Angel and the Revealer of the Lord, who is identical in essence with Jehovah, who bears the lofty name of God and in Christ Jesus became man. The Prophet Zechariah, in his nocturnal visions, chapters 1—6, repeatedly prophesied of the coming of the Messiah as a coming of Jehovah to His people through His Angel. Thus He could designate the slaying of the Angel as the slaying of Jehovah. They have killed the Lord Himself in the person of His Representative, who intended to show them the greatest love, and actually showed it to them. They crucified the Lord of Glory. This fact they themselves will someday realize. And, therefore, after they have recognized their blindness and have come to a knowledge of their sin, they break out in a bitter lament over Him whom they have pierced. We note that there is a change of persons. "They will look upon Me" is in the first person,



and "they will mourn for Him" is in the third person. But such a transition is very common especially among the Prophets, and here this transition is very significant. It points to the fact that the same One whom the highest God, in view of the unity of essence, has identified with Himself, nevertheless in person is different from Him, as we found in the former passage, 13:7: "The Man who is My Fellow." They lament over Him as over an only son, or over the first-born. This indicates the extent of their grief. They lament over him as over one most dear, for the lament over the only and first son is the profoundest and bitterest dirge. Compare the slaying of the first-born in Egypt, Ex. 12:12, 29-30.

This prophecy in its various parts was fulfilled in a wonderful manner. The piercing of the Messiah was fulfilled in the account of the piercing with the spear, as John 19:33-47 expressly emphasizes. It is true that with the piercing by the spear not the entire prophecy was fulfilled. The piercing took place throughout the entire pangs of our Lord's death, of which the piercing with the spear was the climax. The minds behind this action were the Jews themselves. Pilate and his soldiers were only the instruments of the Jews. The looking and lamenting was fulfilled even earlier, immediately at the beginning of the crucifixion, Luke 23:37-41, and especially after the death of Jesus, Luke 23:48, when the people, after they had heard the last words of Jesus and had seen His death, smote their breasts and returned, repenting of their actions. The masses, which only a short time before had shouted, "Crucify Him," are now struck by the proof of the superhuman majesty of Jesus and reconsider their action and lament the departed and their own wickedness. And especially was this prophecy fulfilled after the Pentecost sermon of St. Peter, Acts 2:36-41, which so affected the heart of 3,000 Jews that they repented, had themselves baptized, and received the Holy Spirit. Compare also the other sermons of the Apostles recorded in Acts 3:15; 4:4; 5:15, and especially 21:20, where St. Paul expressly states that many thousands of Jews, myriads, that is, ten thousands, had come to faith. That the house of David, too, was represented is indicated in Acts 1:14, where Jesus' mother Mary and His brothers are mentioned. And the fulfillment continues in the history of the Church, in the conversion of Jews and of heathen. How-



ever, there is not to be expected a conversion of entire Israel as a nation, as the Chiliasts conclude from this passage. In Rom. 11:26: "All Israel shall be saved," the Apostle means: *totus coetus electorum ex Israele* (the whole company of the elect of Israel). Whoever persists in his unbelief will have to look upon the Pierced One on the occasion of His return and will then wail, Rev. 1:7: "Behold, He cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see Him, and they also which pierced Him; and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. Even so, Amen." Matt. 24:30: "And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven; and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory." In these last two passages Holy Writ sheds light on Zechariah. Besides saving repentance and divine sorrow there is also a Judas repentance, or despair; besides a willing and believing looking at the Pierced One there is also an involuntary looking which even unbelief cannot escape. The extent of the sorrow and its universality is then further described in vv. 11-14, so far as both the profoundness and bitterness of the sorrow, v. 11, and its extent over the entire land, vv. 12-14, are concerned. However, we can not discuss this at the present time.

So much for Zechariah, the Prophet of Holy Week. Together with Micah, the "little Isaiah," Zechariah is king among the minor prophets, the "Prophet of hope," one of the "most comforting Prophets," and well worth detailed study.

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## Is Doctrinal Unity a Luxury?

By TH. ENGELDER

Some time ago this view was expressed in the *Christian Century*: "In a world like ours, nothing seems to me to be less important than agreement about our theology. . . . Struggling to get such an agreement is a luxury which, perhaps, we can return to when the times are less desperate." (See CONC. THEOL. MONTHLY, 1945, p. 569.) Unity in doctrine is here called a luxury; it may be a good thing for the Church to have, but the Church can get along very well without it. Her health does not require it.

The common unionist uses stronger language. He denounces the struggle to get an agreement in doctrine as contrary to God's will. John De Witt declared: "Was it the divine purpose that those who love the Lord Jesus Christ should think alike on all points of doctrine—the Arminians and Calvinists, Churchmen and Dissenters, Sprinklers and Immersionists? If this were so, never has a divine purpose failed so lamentably." (*What Is Inspiration?* p. 142.) Unionism commonly declares that God desires multiplicity of doctrine. Accordingly E. Stanley Jones is in favor of organizing all denominations into one large Church, in which no denomination dare claim to have all the truth and no denomination would lose its identity, since each would constitute a branch within the Church of Christ. "It is a movement of the Spirit," Dr. Jones said in the *Christian Century* of Jan. 14, 1947, which will "create a union of difference—united diversity." Charles Macfarland, Secretary Emeritus of the Federal Council, believes that "the age of doctrinal unity has passed away and there is no possibility of educated and conscientious men agreeing in any one philosophy of theology" (*Christian Unity*, p. 163). And this variety of doctrine constitutes the strength of Protestantism. Dr. Ivan Lee Holt (Methodist): "Within the ranks of the Protestant Church are many varieties of opinion from Fundamentalism to Humanism. There is no body of doctrine that commends itself to all, and there is no authority which can compel. . . . At the same time there is a strength in the freedom of individuality within the large group. There is today a cry for freedom, and the genius of Protestantism

is the right of each individual to his own interpretation of truth." (At a symposium conducted in St. Louis on May 16, 1930.)

The writer in the *Christian Century* seems to take a different view. He refuses to call the struggle for doctrinal unity a sin. He states that it is a luxury which the Church can dispense with in these hard days and take up later on. And so the question arises: Is doctrinal unity merely a luxury?

# I

We answer, in the first place, that Scripture leaves no room for such a notion. Scripture nowhere states that doctrinal unity is dispensable, but insistently calls for it. Eph. 4:3 asks us to endeavor "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." 1 Cor. 1:10 demands that "ye all speak the same thing . . . that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment," and 2 Cor. 13:11 has the command: "Be of one mind." Scripture incessantly warns us against those who would disrupt the unity of doctrine. There is Matt. 7:15: "Beware of false prophets," and Rom. 16:17: "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them," and 2 John 10: "If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him Godspeed." Scripture certainly does not treat the unity of faith and doctrine as a luxury item which the Church does not need for its well-being, but demands that the Church struggle to obtain and keep it.

Hear what Luther has to say on this point. "The world at the present time is sagaciously discussing how to quell the controversy and strife over doctrine and faith and how to effect a compromise. . . . Such patchwork is not according to God's will. The 'Word demands that doctrine, faith, and worship must be preserved pure and unadulterated.'" (XII: 973.) "The holy Church cannot and dare not brook any lie or false doctrine, but must teach the holy truth, that is, God's Word alone" (XVII: 1341). Hear what Walther wrote in the Foreword to the fourth volume of the *Lutheraner*, from that time on the organ of the Missouri Synod: "We shall continue to make use of this small church paper not only to bear testimony to the truth, but also, so much as lies in our power, to

uncover and combat the doctrinal errors which are now rampant, particularly those which seek entrance into our Lutheran Church. . . . We do not want to come under the condemnation of the closing words of the Bible: 'If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life' (Rev. 22:18-19)." And: "The Ev. Lutheran Church accepts the whole written Word of God (as God's Word), deems nothing in it superfluous or of little worth, but everything needful and important" (*Walther and the Church*, p. 125). Hear M. Loy: "We are constrained to stand aloof from all Church unions founded on any other basis than that of the truth revealed in God's Word and confessed in our Symbols. . . . The only Scriptural way to labor for union is to labor for unity in the faith and agreement in its confession. That is divinely required and therefore essential." (*Distinctive Doctrines*, p. 15.) And C. P. Krauth: "There can be, there is, no true unity but in the faith. . . . The one token of this unity, that by which this internal thing is made visible, is one expression of faith, one 'form of sound words,' used in simple earnestness, and meaning the same to all who employ it. You may agree to differ; but when men become earnest, difference in faith will lead first to fervent pleadings for the truth, and, if these be hopelessly unheeded, will lead to separation." (See F. Bente, *American Lutheranism*, II, p. 184.) And Ernst Sommerlath, Leipzig: "Our Lutheran Confessions stand for the truth learned from God's Word. They stand on guard lest anything be lost from the treasure of the Church. . . . Our Church hates false doctrine; the unity which she seeks is the unity in the truth. Her Confessions are not meant as a hindrance to unity, but are designed to bring about unity. She stands for honesty and truthfulness, and knows that only in that way, God being gracious, unity can be accomplished." (*Allg. Ev.-Luth. Kirchenz.*, June 9, 1933.) And Werner Elert: "The Lutheran Church declares itself ready to have church fellowship with all Christians—under one condition: that we are one in doctrine" (*Allg. Ev.-Luth. Kz.*, Nov. 18, 1927). And Hans Boehm (Germany): "Our Lutheran Confessions issue this watchword: when any union is accomplished which for the sake of external strength

ignores, or even suppresses, the desire to establish a common basis of the faith, that unity was not brought about by the Lord Jesus, but by the devil" (*Kirchliche Zeitschrift*, December, 1939, p. 756).

Let the unionist declare the struggle for unity on the basis of God's Word to be sinful and say with K. Barth: Let the Roman Church work out its doctrine of nature and grace, with the Tridentine teaching of justification, and the Protestant Churches stick to justification by grace. "These very men who have found themselves forced to confront a clear, thoroughgoing, logical *sic et non* find themselves allied to each other, in spite of all contradictions, by an underlying fellowship and understanding" (*Prolegomena* to the 1937 World Conference, p. 36). And let the unionist say with Bischof Zoellner: "We have no intention of killing off the denominations" (*Allg. Ev.-Luth. Kz.*, Nov. 27, 1936), or declare agreement in doctrine an unneeded luxury, the Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Confessions and Holy Scripture insist that all Christians agree in the doctrine.

And, mark well, agree *in all doctrines* and in all points of doctrine. Read the passages quoted above, and see whether the Christians are enjoined to be of one mind only in the most important doctrines and whether they should beware of only those false prophets who deny the essentials of the Christian doctrine. And then study passages like Matt. 28:20: "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." The faith for which the Church must earnestly contend (Jude 3) comprises all the articles of faith. There will be oneness of mind and, consequently, oneness of mouth only if the Church observes "whatsoever things were written for our learning" (Rom. 15:4-6). True unity will be accomplished on the basis of the whole truth. The Church does not discount the least article of the revealed religion. Whether these articles be fundamental or non-fundamental, whether they be more important or less important for the body of doctrine, agreement in doctrine takes in all that Christ commanded, also the so-called secondary points, the subordinate details, the peripheral, marginal, minor matters of doctrine. "I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27).

Do you care to hear the Lutheran commentary on these

passages? Luther: "The doctrine is not ours, but God's, whose ministers only we are called; therefore we may not change or diminish one tittle thereof. . . . We protest that we desire nothing more than to be at unity with all men: so that they leave unto us the doctrine of faith, entire and incorrupt. Not by a hair's breadth will we recede in this matter. . . . We are bound to keep all the articles of the Christian doctrine, great ones and *small ones* (we do not, in fact, consider any of them small), pure and certain. We consider this of great importance, and it is very necessary." "Wherefore let us learn to advance and extol the majesty and authority of God's Word. For it is no small trifle; but every tittle thereof is greater than heaven and earth." "They say that one should not contend so arduously about one article of faith, that even though somebody should hold an error in a minor matter, one might yield a little and tolerate it. No, dear sir; none of that peace and unity for me, through which God's Word is lost." (IX: 644—649; 655; 831.) And the Formula of Concord states: "We believe, teach, and confess also that no church should condemn another because one has less or more external ceremonies — if otherwise there is agreement among them in doctrine and *all its articles*." "We have no intention of yielding aught of the eternal, immutable truth of God for the sake of temporal peace, tranquillity, and unity. . . . But we are anxious to advance that unity, according to our utmost power, by which His glory remains to God unimpaired, no room is given to the least error." (*Trigl.*, pp. 831, 1095.) And in the Preface to the Christian Book of Concord we read: "Therefore we also have determined not to depart even a finger's breadth either from the subjects themselves or from the phrases which are found in them, but, the Spirit of the Lord aiding us, to persevere constantly, with the greatest harmony, in this godly agreement" (*Trigl.*, p. 23).

Some more Lutheran commentary on our passages. Walther: "Baier remarks: 'This concerns the doctrine of the Christian faith and life; note here, that that does not mean exclusively those parts of the Christian doctrine which every man must know if he is not to lose faith and salvation, but it means the entire Christian doctrine in all its parts. . . . For agreement in all of these articles is necessary for establishing the right churchly peace, and as long as a dissensus remains,



the peace will not be a true one. . . . We cannot take and treat a doctrine which is clearly revealed in God's Word or which runs counter to God's clear Word as an open question, let it be ever so subordinate, lying ever so far away from the center of the doctrine of salvation, being ever so peripheral." (*Lehre u. Wehre*, Vol. 14, pp. 2, 66.) "In the orthodox Church no error contrary to God's Word dare be granted the right to exist; in the Lutheran Church there dare be no liberty to deviate at all from God's Word, even if such deviation consisted only in denying that Balaam's ass spoke. For God's Word says: 'Neither shall ye diminish aught from it,' Deut. 4:2; 'A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump,' Gal. 5:9; 'The Scripture cannot be broken,' John 10:35; 'Till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the Law,' Matt. 5:18. . . . Who can, who dare destroy and break God's Word even in respect to a tittle? . . . Luther says: 'Wherefore let us learn to advance and extol the majesty and authority of God's Word. For it is no small trifle; but every tittle thereof is greater than heaven and earth!' (*Der Lutheraner*, Vol. 25, pp. 42, 52.) "Our Church has taken for her foundation the Holy Scripture; on this foundation she has placed herself firmly; from this foundation she will not depart a hair's breadth (*'vel transversum, ut ajunt, unquem'*). . . . That is her crown and glory — she will not and cannot let it be taken from her. . . . True union, the goal of Christ's Church, has already been achieved in the true Lutheran Church. True union is none other than the true Evangelical Lutheran Church." (*Lehre u. Wehre*, 1871, p. 11.) F. Pieper: "Teaching in God's house, the Christian Church, is a very serious matter. The teachers should never forget: 1. Nowhere does Scripture give anyone the license to deviate from God's Word in any single point. The regulations governing all members of this household to the Last Day require: 'Teaching men to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you,' Matt. 28:20. 2. Any deviation from the Word of Christ, which the Church has in the Word of His Apostles, is called an offense (*σκανδαλον ποιῆν*), Rom. 16:17." (*Christliche Dogmatik*, I, p. 39.) "All Christians are required to agree on all articles of faith revealed in Holy Scripture (1 Cor. 1:10; Eph. 4:3-6). . . . The only way, therefore, to cause the divisions to disappear, is to remind the Christians of their duty to part with error,

and, consequently, with all persons that persist in proclaiming doctrines contrary to Scripture, and to unite with those that teach the pure Word of God. Christians should never agree to disagree on any article of faith, but earnestly endeavor to bring about an agreement on all doctrines revealed in Holy Scripture. Nothing but the revealed truth, and the *whole* revealed truth — that is the platform which God has made for the Christian, and which every Christian is commanded to stand upon. An agreement on a more or less comprehensive collection of so-called 'fundamental articles,' selected by man, leaving a portion of the divinely revealed truth to the discretion of the dissenting parties, is a position wholly unbecoming to Christians, for, not to deny, but to confess the Word of Christ, is their duty in this world." (*Distinctive Doctrines*, p. 127; 137 f.) "Churches cannot unite on the basis of a partial consensus to the Christian doctrine. The reason for that is that nowhere in Scripture is the Church authorized to yield any one article of the Christian doctrine revealed in Scripture. The Church is not the mistress of the Christian doctrine, to add to it or take from it according to circumstances; she is only the maid-servant of the Word of God, and can only confess it." (*Lehre u. Wehre*, 1918, p. 130.)

Some more Lutheran commentary. F. Bente: "The unity of the Spirit, which God demands and which characterizes the Church, requires acceptance of all doctrines of Holy Scripture. . . . According to Eph. 4:13, 14 it is required that all members of the Church keep away from error and remain in one faith and knowledge of the Son of God. And he causes divisions and offenses in the Church who introduces anything un-Scriptural into the Church, Rom. 16:17." (*Lehre u. Wehre*, 1897, p. 204.) Adolf Hoenecke: "No man has the liberty to say: This article is contained in the Bible, but I do not believe in it. He would be subverting the authority of Scripture, the organic foundation. . . . It is certainly left to no man's discretion whether he will believe and confess any particular doctrine which is clearly revealed in Scripture." (*Ev.-Lutherische Dogmatik*, I, pp. 452, 454.) And the centennial publication of the Missouri Synod, *The Abiding Word*, says in volume II, p. 526: "Christ's disciples are not to become guilty of divisions among themselves. They must confess all of Christ, the Christ that rose from the dead, the Christ that

taught, let us say, Infant Baptism or whatever else He has taught in His Word. . . . God wants His children to keep the outward bond of fellowship intact, so that His Word is properly taught and confessed by them."

And some more. Writing in the *Lutheran* of July 15, 1942, Dr. W. H. Greever, secretary of the U. L. C. A., says: "The importance of Christian doctrine depends exactly upon the importance of God's Word. . . . Certainly God has not revealed any truth He does not deem of essential importance, and whoever teaches God's Word to others has no right to omit anything or to discount the importance of anything it contains. The great commission is to teach 'all things whatsoever I have commanded.' The unity in Gospel truth is no less vital than unity in the Law, of which it is said that 'whoever offend in one point is guilty in all.' . . . Every doctrine of the Scriptures which can be formulated clearly as a dogma is an essential doctrine in the Christian faith." In his book *What Matters* he says: "Every doctrine of Scripture which can be formulated clearly as a dogma is an essential doctrine of the Christian faith. . . . The confession of faith, through doctrinal statements, is the basis for any sound organic union in the Church. Any organizational union which is not based on confessional agreement in faith may be more of a manifestation of disunity than of unity." (Pp. 16, 51.) And, says the *Lutheran Witness* of Dec. 30, 1947, Dr. W. H. Greever, in a small pamphlet issued last month, rejects the notion that union may be established on such a simple declaration as this: "I accept Jesus Christ as divine Lord and Savior" (creed of the Federal Council of Churches). He regards every such proposal of union as "dishonest and ineffective." "Those who seek complete unity in Christ can allow for themselves neither doctrinal indifference nor doctrinal indefiniteness. To tolerate a difference in the interpretation of truth is to compromise conviction, and to compromise conviction is to destroy it." He points out that "the Lutheran Church now *stands alone*, in all Christendom, in the *emphasis it puts upon Scriptural doctrine*." *Landesbischof Ihmels*: "We know that the Lord of the Church has placed the responsibility upon us that nothing of what He has entrusted to His Church should be lost through any fault of ours. And we know that we are responsible to all seeking and inquiring men that we do not withhold from them any-

thing which the Lord would tell them and give them. For that reason we pray in all seriousness: 'Erhalt uns, Herr, bei deiner Lehr.' " (See *Luth. Kz.*, Sept. 6, 1930.)

The proposition: "It is neither necessary nor possible to agree in all non-fundamental doctrines" is not in accord with Matt. 28:20.\* Luther and the Formula of Concord disavowed it.

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\* If the statement criticized means or implies that unity in all non-fundamental doctrines need not be striven for, or that non-fundamental doctrines may be treated like open questions, it certainly must be rejected. But if it merely states that two church bodies may have fellowship even if agreement in all non-fundamental doctrines has not yet been reached and that here on earth full agreement in all non-fundamental teachings is not attainable, a thought is expressed which Dr. Walther voiced repeatedly. Cf., f. i., his Foreword for *Lehre und Wehre*, Vol. 14 (1868), p. 66 f.: "We do not wish to maintain that church fellowship must terminate with a member of the Church as soon as it is evident that he is entertaining an error which contradicts a clear word of God. It is hardly possible to imagine a more horrible fanaticism, definitely destroying the unity of the Church which it seeks to maintain. The Church has never reached a higher degree of unity in doctrine than a fundamental unity. Only an enthusiastic Chiliast could entertain the hope that the Church ever can reach a higher degree. As long as the Church lives in the flesh, it will be just as impossible for her to reach this high degree as it is for her to attain perfect holiness in Christian living and in Christian love. Luther therefore is right when he says: 'If the saints were not subject to error in faith and truth, why does St. Peter teach that they must grow in faith and in the knowledge of Christ? 1 Pet. 2:2. St. Paul also taught that we should grow in Christ so that we would not, like little children, be tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, Eph. 4:12, 14. But as faith decreases in us, error and unbelief will increase.' (St. L., XIX: 1131.) In the second place, we do not wish to maintain that a Church has lost the true character of a Church which an orthodox Christian may fellowship if she still harbors an error which, while not destroying the foundation of faith, nevertheless militates against the clear Word of God. To admit that every true member of the Church may err and to deny at the same time that the entire true Church may err, is a most despicable contradiction of which only a Papist could be guilty. As long as a Church has not hardened herself in her error, that error, even though it may be of a rather serious nature, does not necessitate a separation, least of all if she has begun to strive for unity on the basis of the truth. Luther's words, therefore, are right: 'The holy Church sins and stumbles or even errs at times, as the Lord's Prayer teaches, but she does not defend nor excuse herself. She humbly prays for forgiveness and improves herself as much as she can. Therefore she has forgiveness, and her sin is no longer counted against her.' (St. L., XIX: 1294.) Again he says: 'They (the Papists) do not distinguish between erring and continuing in error. It does not harm the Church to err, but it is impossible for her to continue in error.' (St. L., XIX: 1243.) Finally, Luther wrote: 'It is true that Christendom is holy and cannot err (for the Third Article says, I believe in the holy Christian Church). But this is true in so far as it pertains to the spirit. The Church is only holy in Christ and not in herself. But in as far as she is still in the flesh, she has sin, can err and be deceived. For the sake of the spirit, however, her sin and failings are forgiven. . . . Thus all Christendom erred in the beginning in Jerusalem when it insisted on

Is full agreement in the doctrine merely a luxury which the Church may pass up at the present time? The Lord has commanded the Church to strive after it at all times.

## II

Our second point is that the acceptance of all Christian doctrine is needed by the Church for its healthy growth. We can dispense with luxuries, but we need at all times the life-giving food. We need every single doctrine revealed in Holy Scriptures for our spiritual development. "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope" (Rom. 15:4). The Church feeds on the Savior and His Word. And yielding portions of the truth saps the Church of so much of her spiritual strength. False doctrine, any false doctrine, "will eat as doth a canker." It is a festering sore, and it will ultimately "overthrow the faith" (2 Tim. 2:17-18). Chewing on the chaff of erroneous teachings will destroy the faith. And it is the duty of every minister of Christ to combat the error in whatever form it appears. He must "hold fast the faithful Word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by

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circumcision for the heathen and commanded that the Law of Moses had to be kept, otherwise there could be no salvation. This insistence was contrary to the chief doctrine on which Christianity rests, namely, that we are saved alone through Christ and His grace, without the Law and without circumcision, a doctrine that St. Paul maintained only with great difficulty. It is not surprising that the Christian Church later on, when she was not so rich in spirit, erred and missed the mark at times; yet she remained holy through forgiveness of sins, just as the Apostolic Church.' (St. L., XVI: 1410 f.) Finally, we do not wish to maintain that there is no difference between the members of the Church and that all must share the same correct opinion on those points of Biblical doctrine which do not belong to the dogmatical foundation. It may happen that a simple Christian will deny a secondary fundamental doctrine all his life because he cannot grasp the correctness and the necessity of the deduction which is involved. If it is improper to exclude such a man from the communion of the Church as a heretic because he persists in his denial or clings to an error concerning a secondary fundamental doctrine, it all the more is not right to exclude a man because of an error in a point of doctrine which does not belong to the fundamental articles of the Christian faith. Kromayer therefore is right when he says: "The varying degrees of certainty with respect to conclusions drawn from the clear Word of God do not change the authority of the divine Word, but they constitute an excuse for many weak Christians (since they cannot all grasp these conclusions immediately) and demand that those who are able to understand these conclusions because of deeper insight tolerate the weak Christians.'" (Translated in C. T. M., Vol. 17, July, 1946, pp. 494-496.)

EDITORIAL NOTE



sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers" (Titus 1:9). When we insist on keeping the whole body of doctrine pure and unadulterated, we are not dishing out a luxury for the Church, but we are providing the food which the Church needs. In the words of L. Keyser: "We must have the whole Christ of the whole Bible, if we want a whole salvation" (*A Reasonable Faith*, p. 50).

H. Sasse utters this warning: "The necessity of bringing into prominence as the essential revelation that part of the Scriptures which contains a direct declaration of the Gospel's promise of grace to the believing sinner, can result in failure to recognize *the importance of other parts of the Scripture*." (*Here We Stand*, p. 117). And Pieper says: "The Church attains at all times its greatest strength when she abides by the Word of God *in all points*. . . . It is certainly folly to imagine that yielding this or that part of the Christian doctrine would be to the best interest of the Church. . . . If that were the best method for conquering the world, Christ would not have instructed the Church to 'teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.' . . . We would be deceiving ourselves if we thought that the union with false teaching or the toleration of false teaching would be of benefit to the Church." (*Proc., Oregon and Washington Dist., 1924*, p. 35.) The Church cannot get along without the doctrine of the angels; it daily needs the comfort given by the presence and protection of the good angels, and the warning against the seduction of the evil angels. But for the doctrine of Sunday the Church might be led back to the nomism of the Jewish Ceremonial Law. The doctrine of the Antichrist keeps the Church on her guard against the mystery of iniquity practiced by the Pope. And the Church needs to be warned against the false hopes of terrestrial happiness set before her by the teachings of millennialism. Not a single doctrine of Scripture belongs in the category of luxury; all of them come under the category of necessity.

In the Preface to the Triglotta edition of the Lutheran Confessions, F. Bente writes: "The Lutheran Church differs from all other churches in being essentially the Church of the pure Word and unadulterated Sacraments. Not the great number of her adherents, not her organization, not her charitable and other institutions, not her beautiful customs and



liturgical forms, etc., but the precious truths confessed by her symbols in perfect agreement with the Holy Scriptures constitute the true beauty and rich treasures of our Church, as well as the *never-failing source of her virility and power.*" (Trigl., p. IV.)

Furthermore, the strength of the Church lies in the *united* confession of all the doctrines revealed. A church in which there is no agreement in doctrine does not appeal to the Christian. "Now, the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus, that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 15: 5-6). Luther: "The Holy Ghost produces harmony in the house; He does that by teaching the Christians to believe the same thing, to know the same thing, to teach the same thing. . . . Any other unity is merely external and painted." (XIX: 345.) Who would want to live in a house or worship in a church where the minister on one Sunday preaches on the necessity of observing the Jewish Sabbath and on the next Sunday has the guest preacher extol the freedom of the Christians from the Ceremonial Law? What hopeless confusion would arise if under Zwingli's plan, who called the difference in the teaching concerning the Lord's Supper only a "secondary point," at the same altar one minister would distribute the bread according to the Reformed doctrine and the second minister, in handing the cup to the communicants, would say: "This is My blood of the New Testament"? And when the question of the inspiration of Holy Scripture comes up, and H. E. Fosdick preaches the first sermon and declares: "For one thing, we are saved by it" (by discarding Verbal Inspiration and using the new approach to the Bible) "from the old and impossible attempt to harmonize the Bible with itself" (*The Modern Use of the Bible*, p. 24), and the second preacher contends for Verbal Inspiration, only the gross unionist (according to whom also inspiration, the form of it, constitutes a point on which different "approaches" are in order) will feel at home. Dr. J. A. Dell, however, would say that if it comes to a choice between these two: (1) outward unity, with a hushing up or smoothing over of deep-going differences in our view regarding the reliability of the Bible, and (2) outward disunity, even controversy, by which the doctrine of inspiration is

thrust into the foreground, he would prefer the second, for the former case never leads to a real unity. (See *Journal of the Am. Luth. Conference*, March, 1938.) And Dr. Pieper declared: "To have those who confess and those who deny the divine authority of Scripture dwell together in brotherly harmony in the same Church, as though nothing separated them, presents an intolerable situation — though it is practiced today quite generally, even in the Lutheran Church of America" (*Lehre u. Wehre*, 1928, p. 370).

And in the united confession of the truth and the united rejection of all error there lies a mighty power for good. A church thrown together by unionistic practices is not an army, fit to fight the battles of the Lord, but a rabble foredoomed to defeat. But if the Church used all the power put at her disposal by the Lord, employed all the weapons with which her armory is filled, and expelled all traitors from her midst, she would go forward like a mighty army and gain victory after victory.

Walther: "When a theologian is asked to yield and make concessions in order that peace may at last be established in the Church, but refuses to do so in a single point of doctrine, such an action looks to human reason like intolerable stubbornness, yea, like downright malice. . . . But in the end it becomes manifest that this very determined, inexorable Word by no means tears down the Church; on the contrary, it is just this which, in the midst of greatest dissension, builds up the Church and ultimately brings about genuine peace. Therefore, woe to the Church which has no men of this stripe, men who stand as watchmen on the walls of Zion, sound the alarm whenever a foe threatens to rush her walls, and rally to the banner of Jesus Christ for a holy war!" (*Law and Gospel*, p. 28.) Krauth: "In the great mercy of God . . . the work is going on, and will go on, until the old ways have been found — till the old banner again floats on every breeze, and the old faith, believed, felt, and lived, shall restore the Church to her primal glory and holy strength. God speed the day! For our Church's name, her history, her sorrows, and her triumphs, her glory in what has been, her power for the good yet to be, all are bound up with the principle that purity in the faith is first of all, such a first that without it there can be no true second." (*The Conservative Reformation*, p. 200.)

## III

A third point. If men have the right to treat the belief of some non-fundamental as a luxury, it will inevitably follow that they will take the right to treat the most fundamental article as equally unnecessary. Whoever denies God in one word, will — unless the grace of God prevents it — deny Him in all words. Luther said that. "It is certain that whosoever does not rightly believe or desire one article (after full instruction and admonition) certainly does not believe any at all with true earnestness and right faith. And whosoever is so presumptuous as to deny God or call Him a liar in one word and does this deliberately, against repeated instruction and admonition, will also deny God in all His words and in all of them call Him a liar. Therefore it is necessary to believe all and everything truly and fully or else believe nothing. The Holy Spirit does not allow Himself to be separated or divided, so that He should teach or have us believe one doctrine as true and another as false." (XX:1781.) "It is a wily and Satanic proposition that demands that we should somewhat yield and tolerate one error in order to preserve Christian unity. Satan is thereby attempting to lead us away from the Word. For if we accept that proposition, he has won the case, and when we yielded only a finger's breadth, he has gained a whole ell and will soon take all." (IX:832.)

St. Paul said that when he, for instance, said: "I determined not to know anything among you save Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:2), he did not say that the various other doctrines which he preached were dispensable, but he included all of them in the doctrine of Christ. All of them affect, in a greater or less degree, the doctrine of salvation through Christ crucified. In the words of Dr. Pieper: "The Christian doctrine is not a big mass of doctrines which have no inner connection, so that one could lose a half dozen of them without noticing any effect on the whole. On the contrary, the Christian doctrine is, as Luther frequently said, a ring which forms a whole; it constitutes a large inner unity." (*Lehre u. Wehre*, 1918, p. 130.) The denial of one little doctrine prepares the way for the denial of some important doctrine and of all doctrines.

Let history tell the sorry tale. Unionism does not simply declare the difference in the doctrines of the Antichrist and of

Eschatology to be immaterial, but it also frowns upon making the difference in the Lord's Supper divisive of church fellowship. It will bear with both synergism and monergism. It will tolerate those who make justification judicial and those who see in it an ethical act. It considers the discussion of the *genus idiomaticum* and the *genus majesticum* and the *genus apotelesmaticum* a frightful waste of time. It will harm the Church if some insist on the verbal inspiration of the Bible. All these things are non-fundamental; all that is needed is belief in Christ. Says a contributor to *The Reunion of Christendom*: "The acceptance of the historical revelation of God and the historical redemption of man in Jesus Christ is basic. Interpretation of some of the facts may vary and room must be left for literary and historical criticism of the documents; but I at least cannot think of a United Church which did not confess Jesus Christ as divine Savior or Lord. Without asserting the adequacy for the thought of today of the metaphysics of the Nicene Creed, or the literal historicity of every article of the Apostles' Creed, the United Church would declare itself in real and vital continuity of the faith with these confessions of 'the things most surely believed.'" (P. 147.)

And Dr. Visser 't Hooft, secretary of the World Council of Churches, on July 25, 1947, gave this as the *doctrinal* basis upon which a church is accepted or rejected: "The church must accept Christ as God and Savior." That and nothing more. And, as the *Christian Beacon*, Aug. 28, 1947, remarked: "However, Dr. Visser 't Hooft made it clear that it is up to each church to decide if they are within this bound. Hence, doctrinally the Unitarian Church apparently qualifies if they themselves say they come under its doctrinal line." — Orrin G. Judd declared that "private interpretation of the Scriptures necessarily involves the possibility of disagreement on some points that are not fundamental" (see the *Watchman-Examiner*, Dec. 9, 1943). — "Non-fundamentals," as used by the unionists, covers a wide territory — and R. W. Dale insisted: "It would be treason to trifle with the immortal substance of the Gospel of Christ; it would be treason to charity to refuse to receive as brethren those who may differ from us about the theological *forms* in which the substance of the Gospel may be best expressed" (see Fisher, *Hist. of Christian Doctrine*, p. 556).

The point we are here making is this: the toleration of a single error may be attended with frightful consequences. How, then, can the struggle for agreement in *all doctrines* be dismissed as a luxury? — And it is all the same whether you call it a luxury or something sinful; under either view it should never take place.

The Lutheran Church has never looked upon the agreement in doctrine as a luxury. It has always declared with Luther: "If the devil bring it about that men yield to him in one article, he has won the battle. . . . They are all bound and wound together like a golden chain; if one link is broken, the whole chain falls apart." (IX:827.) And: "I will not swerve one finger's breadth from the mouth of Him who said: 'Hear ye Him.' . . . They say: What is the harm of yielding one point? No, not by a hair's breadth may we yield. If they will hold with us, it is well; if not, let them go their way." (From Luther's last sermon preached in Wittenberg, XII: 1174 f.) And these sentiments of Dr. Luther were reproduced by Dr. J. W. Behnken at the Centennial Convention of 1947: "We must dread and abhor any and every false doctrine as a most dangerous virus which poisons the blood streams of the Church and profanes the name of God. . . . Why have many grown lukewarm in their interest for purity of doctrine? Why do some speak about an irreducible minimum of doctrine on the basis of which we should seek agreement, when no doctrine of God's Word clearly revealed dare to be ignored but all must be held inviolable? . . . If we carry out God's good and gracious will in our lives, we become instruments in His hands that His name may be hallowed and His kingdom come." (*Proceedings*, pp. 2, 3, 5.)

(To be concluded)

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## Homiletics

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### The Nassau Pericopes

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#### TENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

MATT. 21:33-44

*The Text and the Day.* — The Gospel, Jesus Weeping over Jerusalem, and our text, the Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen, present, in quite different settings, the same tremendous truth: Rejection of God's grace in Christ calls down on men God's wrath and punishment.

*Notes on Meaning.* — The time: Tuesday of Passion Week, the last full workday of our Lord's ministry and one of the busiest in His life. The place: the Temple. The occasion: the challenge of a delegation sent by the Sanhedrin: "By what authority doest Thou these things? And who gave Thee this authority?" (V. 23.) "These things": His preaching and miracles in general and His recent royal entry into Jerusalem and cleansing of the Temple, in particular.

The Parable of the Wicked Husbandmen is Christ's plain, fearless, and stinging answer to that challenge of the Sanhedrists. They and their like-minded predecessors are the "husbandmen," tenants. The "vineyard" which God had planted and furnished with the utmost care and then "let out," leased, to them is Israel. The vineyard was and remained God's. Yet when God sent "His servants," prophets, and required the "fruits" that were His — repentance, faith, obedience — the husbandmen rebelled, mistreating and even killing the servants. God sent "other servants," more prophets, but the husbandmen continued to rebel, mistreat, kill. "Last of all" — what unheard-of patience, long-suffering, love! — God "sent unto them His Son, saying: They will reverence My Son." Here is Jesus' answer to the questions: "By what authority doest Thou these things? And who gave Thee this authority?" He is "His Son." Not God's "servant" — that already would be enough authority — He is God's "Son," the heir and owner of the vineyard. But do the husbandmen respect His authority? Their persistent rebellion against God reaches its climax in the rejection and murder of the only-begotten Son of God.



But if the religious leaders of the Jews are thinking that they can thus eliminate God's Son and usurp God's reign, they are "imagining a vain thing." "He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh. . . ." The Christ, whom they are about to crucify, will rise to become "the Head of the corner." The Kingdom of God will be taken away from Israel and "given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." The rebellious husbandmen will be ground to powder by the wrath of the Lamb — unless they will heed what a loving Savior was trying to say to them on that last Tuesday, even by this parable of judgment: "Kiss the Son lest He be angry and ye perish from the way when His wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in Him."

*Preaching Pitfalls.* — Do not waste precious time — and the attention of your hearers — by dwelling at great length on the rebellious husbandmen who lived two thousand years ago. Speak of, and to, the rebellious husbandmen of today. There are many of them. And one of them is — our own God-hating self.

*Problem and Goal.* — "The carnal mind is enmity against God." Modernism rejects the divine authority of His Word and of His Son, and deifies its own inflated "I." And we ourselves are tempted to follow our reason rather than the Scriptures, to rely on our works rather than on the merits of Christ, and to live unto ourselves rather than unto God. Every such lifting up of self is rebellion against the Lord of the vineyard. May we fear His punishment, give Him the fruits of repentance, faith, and obedience, and let Him "reign supreme, and reign alone" both in our hearts and in our lives.

*Outline:*

REBELS IN THE CHURCH OF GOD

- I. They defy the authority of God.
- II. They reject the very Son of God.
- III. They incur the wrath of God.
- IV. But they will never destroy the Church of God.

OSWALD RIESS

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## ELEVENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

MATT. 5:1-12

*The Text and the Day.* — The second of the smaller Trinity cycles closes with this Sunday. The general theme has been "The New Life of Righteousness." We have been exhorted to be loyal, to be true, to be keenly alive to our stewardship. We have been warned against fickleness. The Beatitudes are largely in the spirit of the Propers for this Sunday. Note the harmony existing between the Epistle and Gospel and Collect! The Collect is a wonderful little prayer, which the pastor may recommend to his people as they bow their heads in the quiet moment before the service begins. The Gospel shows that the true worship of God is a casting of one's self upon His love. We must all guard against the spirit of the Pharisee in our hearts and in our worship. Pride in what we do, feeling one's self better than others, unfair judging — such a religion and worship is vain. The one who comes in humility, meekness, hungering and thirsting for righteousness will hear the gladdening words: "Christ died for our sins. . . . But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain."

*Notes on Meaning.* — The most careless reader is struck with the contrast between the delivery of this sermon and the delivery of the Law on Sinai. That came dreadfully with startling effect, this was uttered by a sweet human voice that moved the heart most gently. That was delivered on the storm-rent hill which rose, with its red granite crags, above the scorching wilderness; this was given on the flowery grass of the green hillside which slopes down to the silver lake. Yet the new commandments of the Sermon on the Mount were not meant to abrogate, but rather to expound, the Law spoken from Sinai. The Law was founded on the eternal distinctions of right and wrong — distinctions as eternal as God. Easier would it be to sweep away heaven and earth than to destroy one *yodh* of its moral grandeur. Jesus warned them that He came not to abolish the Law, but to obey and fulfill it. He taught, however, that obedience to the Law had nothing to do with scrupulous adherence to the letter, but was rather a surrender of the heart and will to the innermost meaning and spirit of the Law.

The Sermon gives a new revelation of what constitutes

blessedness. The people were expecting a Messiah who should break the yoke off their necks. Their minds were haunted with legendary predictions of a Messiah who would clothe them with jewels and scarlet and feed them with even a sweeter manna than the wilderness had known. Christ reveals a different type of happiness — the riches of poverty, the royalty of meekness, the blessing of sorrow and persecution.

V. 1: "Poor in spirit" — against worldly exaltation and pride Jesus teaches the virtue of the lowly, humble spirit, teachable, submissive, trustful. "Neither be ye called masters, for One is your Master, even Christ." "He that is greatest among you shall be as he that serveth." "Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled; and whosoever shall humble himself shall be exalted."

V. 2: "They that mourn" — penitent distress over our sins and honest exploration of ourselves, a true judgment, leads to repentance not to be repented of.

V. 3: "The meek" — richness is in the fewness of our wants. They that learn to think, to thank, to ponder the wonders of His grace, will truly inherit the earth and discover the meaning of Paul's words: "All things are yours."

V. 4: "Hunger and thirst after righteousness" — one of the chief Christian virtues is the desire to be virtuous, to have the Spirit of Christ. If we are less perfect than Christ, we need a Savior. In striving for true righteousness we discover the greatness of our need and are led to the greatness of Christ's grace.

V. 5: "The merciful" — "Wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself." The Parable of the Unmerciful Servant, himself a successful pleader for mercy, but unwilling to accord it to his fellow servant, shows the meaning of this beatitude. Others may not deserve mercy, but neither did we.

V. 6: "Pure in heart" — purity of heart springs from inner reverence for oneself as the object of God's love. He who is to live in the sight of God will learn to love the things which God loves and to strive for a heart that is pure from evil. Our hearts will not be perfectly clean, but the desire for clean hearts will always be true if we walk after the Spirit.

V. 7: "The peacemakers" — we are to be not only meek and merciful ourselves, but also allayers of strife among others, reconcilers, active promoters of peace, "The wisdom

that cometh from above is first pure, then peacable" (James 3:17).

V. 8: "Persecuted for righteousness' sake" — the success of life is not measured in terms of outward triumph. The one who does God's will is engaged in a heroic enterprise. Persecution, sacrifice, suffering may be in store for him. All these experiences are to be counted as blessings. The scars received for the sake of God will someday shine as jewels. This gives us leave to rejoice. Someday there will be a reversal of judgment: What the world ridiculed will be approved of God; what the world despised will be honored.

*Preaching Pitfalls.* — The Beatitudes are not Gospel promises, but simply the marks of a Christian; they show the spirit and character of one who strives for the God-pleasing life.

*Preaching Emphases.* — This is not the greatest of the three great sermons of our Savior — the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5—7), the Sermon in the Upper Room (John 14—16), the Sermon on the Last Things (Matt. 24—25). The greatest sermon is that preached in the Upper Room, under the shadow of the Cross of Calvary. The center of Christ's ministry is found at Calvary, not in the Sermon on the Mount. The blessed Savior, who Himself put aside His glory, became obedient to the Cross, stooped to the needs of mankind in humble service, endured the persecutions of unjust men, for the joy that was set before Him, the joy of redeeming the world, remained true to His purpose, this Jesus now commends His way to His followers. His grace covers our sin, and His Spirit is to take over our spirit. We are to see the fang of the serpent in the spirit which the world approves — vain ambition, pompous self-assertion, brazen self-reliance. He recommends the putting on of those jewels of character which are in the sight of God of great price.

*Problem and Goal.* — In a world that is highly competitive, commercial, devoted to power, enslaved to things, these lessons must be taught with an insistence that they are the true principles of the Kingdom. Love of those things which Jesus loved and hatred of those things which Jesus hated — this is the high task of the Christian life. "We all . . . are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (2 Cor. 3:18). Mercy, meekness, humility, love — this is the music which echoes on earth harmonies of heaven.

*Outline:*

## FACETS IN GOD'S JEWELS

or

### MARKS OF CHRISTIAN CHARACTER

A running expository comment is suggested rather than an effort to divide the octave of Beatitudes into two or three categories, which seems quite impossible. C. W. BERNER

## TWELFTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

MATT. 6: 9-15

*The Text and the Day.*—This text is very appropriate for this day. The Epistle reminds us that we cannot even think anything of ourselves, but that our sufficiency is of God. The Gospel gives a practical demonstration of God's transcending power and goodness. The Collect addresses itself to the omnipotence and mercy of God, acknowledging that true service of Him can come to us only as His gift. How appropriate, then, to consider the Lord's Prayer, in which these points are so prominent, reminding us also of our own obligation in view of God's goodness.

*Notes on Meaning.*—Holy Writ records the Lord's Prayer twice, here as part of the Sermon on the Mount and later as Jesus' response to the request of a disciple, Luke 11. No doubt Jesus taught it oftener than that. Here it follows hard upon His warning against the vain ostentation and vacuous repetition practiced by the Pharisees with respect to prayer. To pray means to talk to God: not to give the Omniscient needed information regarding our problems, but through our prayers acknowledging and approaching Him as the only and never-failing Helper in time of need. Luther's masterful exposition of this prayer gives us more than sufficient material for this sermon, making further notes on meaning unnecessary. We merely point out: The aorist ἀφήκαμεν (v. 12) indicates that forgiveness must have taken place in our hearts when we seek pardon. Intention is not sufficient.

*Preaching Pitfalls.*—The authenticity of the Doxology should not be discussed. Lack of time will also move us to refrain from offering too much detail in explaining the Seven Petitions, but to content ourselves with presenting the three categories: Spiritual needs; material needs; the averting of,

and deliverance from, spiritual and material ills. Care must be taken v. 14 to make clear that willingness to forgive our offenders is demanded of us, yet is not the cause of our pardon from God.

*Preaching Emphases.* — Take the opportunity to quiet frequently expressed doubts by pointing out that the terms *debts*, *trespasses*, *sins*, are synonyms. The main weight of this sermon should rest upon God's unlimited power and goodness, which along with Christ's command should be an incessant incentive and encouragement to pray. But we should ever be mindful of that solemn obligation to be merciful to others. The "seventy times seven" story of Peter as well as the Parable of the Unmerciful Servant should be utilized. Illustration: L. Harms' story of the sincere, yet foolish lad who offered to keep book on people's transgressions against him, yet felt justified to withhold forgiveness after the 490th sin.

*Problem and Goal.* — Cf. Luther's explanation of the introduction to this prayer, seeking to create in hearers the resolve to go out and do likewise, namely, heartily forgiving and readily doing good to those who sin against us.

*Outline:*

THE PRAYER OF OUR LORD

In placing this beautiful prayer upon our lips, our Savior bids us

- I. To rely implicitly upon the unlimited power and goodness of our heavenly Father.
  - A. In solving our spiritual problems, Petitions I—III;
  - B. In supplying our material need, Petition IV;
  - C. In warding off, or liberating us from, spiritual and physical ills, Petitions V—VII;
  - D. Of all these blessings, our gracious pardon is paramount;
  - E. The Savior's instruction to pray for these things is our guarantee.
- II. To extend the same goodness and mercy to our fellow men.
  - A. This is God's will, from which there is no appeal.
  - B. We must not presume to appeal to justice.
  - C. We must have forgiven our fellow men in our hearts before we seek pardon for our sins.

OTTO E. SOHN



## THIRTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

MATT. 11: 28-30

*The Text and the Day.* — In the Gospel lesson Jesus says three times: "Take no thought." The unrest of the soul shows itself in worry even about food and raiment and the "morrow." Furthermore, the labor of the soul brings no relief as long as we try to serve two masters: "God and mammon." To seek satisfaction in earthly things, whether noble or base, is destructive labor and only adds to the burden of the soul. However, when the soul is at rest, we can begin to cope victoriously with all of life's situations: "Seek ye first the Kingdom of God . . . and all these things will be added unto you." — The Introit shows how penetrating Jesus' diagnosis of our ills is and stresses the fact that rest of the soul is man's number-one need: "Rejoice the *soul* of thy servant." It also tells how this rest of the soul can be had: only when we come as helpless and contrite publicans and say: "Be merciful to me a sinner." Man cannot rely on anything in himself or his fellow men for help: "Save thy servant that *trusteth in thee*." — The Gradual underscores again how futile all the labor of men is in quieting the restlessness of their soul. Don't "put confidence in man." All human devices, philosophies, and schemes break down and leave the soul laboring and heavy laden. However, the soul that has experienced this rest and knows its bliss cannot but burst into the song of the Gradual: "I will sing and give praise." — In the Epistle there is an illustration of the "yoke" of the Lord: "Bear ye one another's burden, and so fulfill the law of Christ."

*Notes on Meaning.* — The simplicity of the words cannot but set our hearts aglow. It must be made clear that the burden of the soul stems from sin and the futile human effort to do something to quiet the guilty conscience. Some difficulty may arise as to what the Lord means with His yoke. The context gives us one cue. The Pharisees had saddled a heavy burden of legal requirements on the souls of the people (cp. also Acts 15:10 and Gal. 5:1), under which they labored in vain. Jesus' yoke is "easy," and His burden is "light," because it is not the yoke of the Law but the commandment of the Gospel: "Come," "take." Through His invitation He even supplies our spiritually dead souls with the power to accept that invitation. The yoke is the positive side

of the healing of the soul. It implies doing something. The soul unburdened of sin will delight and thrive in doing the will of Jesus. It will be a happy, soul-buoying activity. The Christian becomes a yoke fellow with Jesus, who said: "My meat is to do the will of Him who sent Me." Although Jesus here does not directly refer to the cross that the believer takes up in coming to Him and following Him, His promise includes also relief for every trial. The cross-bearer can also come to Him for strength, and so the burden will become light and the yoke easy.

**Preaching Pitfalls.** — These words of Jesus are not meant only for such as have never come to Him in faith. It would be wrong to assume that all our hearers are living serene and happy lives free from all frustrations, conflicts, and tensions of the soul. The surface may be calm, but storms may rage within.

**Preaching Emphases.** — The diagnosis of Jesus goes to the root of man's trouble: (a) Sin does not only damn to all eternity, it makes men unhappy, it dwarfs their lives, it lies at the root of all personality problems. (b) All efforts to find happiness outside Jesus only add to the problem. Because the soul came from the creating hand of an eternal God and is destined for eternity after the brief interlude of this life, nothing mundane can satisfy. Even the noblest exercise of the mind leaves a void where the fullness of peace should dwell. A psychology and psychiatry that does not operate with the *psyche*, the soul, is quackery.

**Problem and Goal.** — The problem: unhappy lives through sin. The goal: blessed lives because Jesus forgives sin; happy and full lives under the yoke of Jesus.

**Outline:**

**JESUS HEALS THE SOUL**

**I. He diagnoses the ills:**

1. Your soul is crushed under a heavy burden;
2. Your soul exhausts itself in futile and destructive labor.

**II. He prescribes the remedy:**

1. It consists in
  - a. removing the burden: "rest";
  - b. supplying healthful, life-giving, soul-satisfying activity: "My yoke," "learn."

2. It is a simple remedy:
  - a. all that is required is to "come" and "take";
  - b. it is so simple that the "wise" reject it but "babes" can apply it (see the context).
3. It is a sure remedy:
  - a. The Physician has the credentials of heaven. "I," "all things" (context);
  - b. it is available in inexhaustible supply: "all" can come;
  - c. it cures the worst case: "all" will receive rest.
4. It affords "rest for the soul" and thus supplies the basis for the remedy of all ills of personality, life, and death.

WALTER R. ROEHRS

## FOURTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY

MATT. 7:13-14

*The Text and the Day.* — This text provides refreshing emphases for the standard lessons for this Sunday. The Epistle wants us to "walk in the Spirit and not in the flesh," and this text illustrates the walk of the Spirit as strait and narrow and that of the lusts of the flesh as wide and broad. The Gospel tells of ten healed lepers, nine of whom are ungrateful, and this text finds a similar proportion between the *many* walking on the broad way and the *few* who find the strait gate.

*Notes on Meaning.* — In the Sermon on the Mount, before the text, Matt. 5:17—7:12, Jesus contrasted Pharisaic keeping of the Law to obedience motivated by the love of God and our neighbor. Now He calls on His disciples to enter the strait gate of the "poor in spirit," to whom He referred at the beginning, 5:3. Incidentally, after the text, He continues His emphasis by warning, on the same basis, against false prophets: "Know them by their fruits"; also against the danger of lip service without true life: "Not everyone that saith, etc." "Enter in," to God's Kingdom and eternal life, ch. 19:17 and 2 Pet. 1:11; "at the strait gate," now opened to you through the words I have spoken unto you. Anything dictated by human reason can be included under the concept "wide gate." Note the difference of verbs used: for wide gate, "go in"; for strait gate, "find it."

*Preaching Pitfalls.*— Since the Sermon on the Mount is advice for Christian life, avoid the conclusion of reason, which may be drawn by hearers, that we gain life by our own efforts in striving to walk the strait and narrow way. It is the *Way*, not we, that leads to life. Scripture has much to say about the true Way. Supply the Gospel background.

*Preaching Emphases.*— Christ, Himself the Way, must be "all in all." The cemeteries of the world are full of people who went down beaten and despairing because they thought God would be satisfied with something less than full devotion. "Forsake all, and follow Me." Even: "He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me." Or: "Who-soever will save His life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose His life for My sake and the Gospel's, the same shall find it." If a man insists on remaining his natural self, the end is always destruction.

*Problem and Goal.*— The human heart is terribly deceitful, especially in matters of religion, and this text must be used to break down all pride in anything that we are, do, or say, to make ourselves acceptable in God's sight. The only right thing to do is to follow the path outlined in God's Word, "a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." This is in agreement with Christ's own application of the Sermon on the Mount in 7:24-27.

*Outline:*

THE TWO WAYS

I. The Way of Destruction:

- A. The wide gate;
- B. The broad way;
- C. Many go in thereat.

II. The Way of Life:

- A. The strait gate;
- B. The narrow way;
- C. Few find it.

HENRY GEO. HARTNER



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## Theological Observer

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**The Lutheran Stream.**—For some time the *Moody Monthly* has described to its readers the various denominational “streams” that have flooded our country and the world. In the May issue of this year it takes up the “Lutheran Stream.” The writer evidently studied, carefully and comprehensively, such works as might enable him to understand the “Lutheran stream” properly, and he shows a fine grasp of the historical development of Lutheranism and of its doctrinal position. Among the laudatory things which he says of Lutheranism are such as these: “Lutheranism is not a sect; it is a deep stream of Protestant thought. Its adherents believe firmly that Martin Luther rediscovered the doctrine of the supreme and absolute authority of the Word of God, and that on the basis of the Scriptures he proclaimed to a world steeped in ecclesiasticism and traditionalism the everlasting Gospel of the forgiving love of God in Christ.” Again: “The cardinal teaching of Lutheranism is the doctrine of justification by faith apart from the deeds of the Law. This doctrine is the key to an intelligent appreciation of the position of Luther and his companions. The Roman Catholic Church had so added to, camouflaged, and twisted the teaching of salvation that it was no longer recognizable. Luther brought it out once more into the open light of day.” Or: “By ‘Justification by faith’ he meant the gracious promise of the forgiveness of sins for Christ’s sake, and man’s affirmative response to that promise [sic?]. This is the Gospel. When a true Lutheran refers to the Gospel, he has in mind principally the saving mediatorial work of Christ upon Calvary. He admits that Jesus preached the Sermon on the Mount, in which He enunciated the Law of Christian love. But he has a horror lest men regard Christ primarily as Lawgiver rather than as Savior.” And: “To him [the true Lutheran] the preaching of the Law is the ‘strange’ work of Christ; the preaching of the Gospel is the ‘real’ work of Christ. He feels that the Reformed and Presbyterian Churches err in this particular.” Or: “He [Luther] was interested in instituting a reform of the Church, not in introducing a revolution from the Church.” But while these and other statements well portray what Lutheranism teaches in its central area, there are other passages which do not correctly represent the Lutheran doctrine, though in some instances the *Moody Monthly* cannot be blamed for the misrepresentation. When, for example, the author writes: “A Book of the Bible is of value only as it relates to Christ,” he is perhaps not aware of the fact that Luther fully accepted the Biblical truth that “to Him all the Prophets give witness” (Acts 10:43) and that, therefore, all the canonical books of the Bible are divinely inspired. The writer here repeats the widely spread half-truth that Luther regarded merely those books to be inspired which urge Christ, though, as a matter of fact, Luther accepted both the verbal and the plenary inspiration of the Bible. Again, on Baptism the

article says: "Lutherans lay great stress on the Sacrament of Baptism. To the question, 'What gifts or benefits does Baptism confer?' the Catechism replies: 'It worketh forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil, and confers everlasting salvation on all who believe, as the Word and promise of God declare.' A later section of the Catechism explains that 'it is not the water indeed that produces these effects, but the Word of God which accompanies and is connected with the water, and our faith which relies on the Word of God, connected with the water. For the water without the Word of God is simply water and no Baptism.' But in spite of this declaration many feel that the Lutherans regard Baptism as more than a means, or channel, of grace. It would almost appear, although many of our Lutheran friends would hasten to deny it, that the Catechism teaches Baptismal regeneration." We do not know why the writer is so very hesitant to say that the Catechism teaches Baptismal regeneration. The statement: "It would almost appear, although many of our Lutheran friends would hasten to deny it," should be deleted and in its place the words be put: "From this it appears that the Catechism teaches Baptismal regeneration." And when it does teach Baptismal regeneration, it teaches no more and no less than do John 3:5; Tit. 3:5; Eph. 5:26, and other passages of Scripture. And why should this be so strange a doctrine that the writer is almost afraid to put it in cold print? If the Gospel regenerates sinners in general (1 Pet. 1:23), why should it not regenerate them also in Holy Baptism? In another place the writer says: "Many feel that the Lutherans are too sacramentarian, that is, that they put too much emphasis on the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper." But we are sure that a little more study of the Lutheran Confessions will convince the writer that the Lutherans put no greater emphasis on the Sacraments than does Scripture. J. T. M.

**Reprinting Religious Books.** — *Theology Today* (April, 1948) offers the following report, which no doubt will interest theologians also in our Church: "The February 14th issue of *Publishers' Weekly*, the trade journal of the American publishing business, is a 'Religious Book Number.' This has a certain appropriateness with the growing popularity of Lenten reading lists. Most of the books advertised in this issue are of a religious character, and the brief articles and news items are also devoted to religious publishing. This is an indication of the importance of religious literature in our so-called secular society and also an indication that religious publishing is a big business. Among the interesting previews offered here is the announcement, on the front cover, that the Abingdon-Cokesbury Award has been granted to John W. Bowman's *The Religion of Maturity* and to Georgia Harkness's *Prayer and the Common Life*. Each is to receive \$7,500. The Westminster Press takes three pages to tell of the forthcoming *Study Edition* of the Bible, which is to be 'a self-explaining Study Edition of the Scriptures, incorporating the discoveries of a modern



research in history and archaeology . . . while yet maintaining a truly Protestant and evangelical viewpoint.' The volume, which has been several years in preparation, is to be ready by September and will retail for \$10.00. Among the editorial paragraphs there is an announcement that promises some hope for the reprinting of important religious books which for one reason and another have been allowed to go out of print. The American Theological Library Association, of which we wrote a few words in our last issue, has drawn up a list of 320 such titles, which, there is reason to believe, would meet a real need and, incidentally, provide a fair financial risk. The list is being submitted to various religious publishers in the hope that they will of their own accord reprint whatever titles they may have. Scribner's is now making available Ayer's *Source Book of Ancient Church History*, Mackintosh's *Types of Modern Theology*, and several others. Harper's reprint program will probably include Dodd's *Apostolic Preaching*, Smith's *Historical Geography of the Holy Land*, and Schaff's *Creeds of Christendom*. Eerdmans' has had, for some time, a program for reprinting older books and has recently begun the ambitious project of re-issuing all of Calvin's commentaries on the Bible. This is all to the good, and nothing is so essential in this day of doctrinal illiteracy as the making available of the great texts of former years. The 'A. T. L. A.' could perform no greater service to theological education than by encouraging religious publishers to keep their big volumes in print. We would like to see, in addition to those mentioned, reprints of such classics as Schleiermacher's *Christian Faith*, Ritschl's *Justification and Reconciliation*, and Troeltsch's *Social Teachings*. It is on such books as these that the good faith of the commercial publisher will be really tested." What is encouraging in this report is not the fact that awards have been granted to Dr. Bowman for his *Religion of Maturity* and to Dr. Harkness for her *Prayer and the Common Life*, since both are liberal and do not convey the Christian message; nor are we much interested in Schleiermacher's *Christian Faith* and Troeltsch's *Social Teachings*. But what is encouraging is the fact that publishers are now planning to give to the public once more such works as Schaff's *Creeds of Christendom*, Mackintosh's *Types of Modern Theology*, and others, and that Eerdmans' has been reproducing for some time conservative Biblical works of superior value. And what is still more encouraging is that our own Concordia Publishing House is now gathering lists of outstanding works, especially Lutheran, which might be translated from the German and handed down to theologians in English-speaking countries in a language understood by them. We recently received from a young pastor of our Church who knows little German the request to speak on behalf of a translation into English of the famous old *Weimar Bibel*. Are we beginning to appreciate anew the values of our glorious past when the study of theology meant digging down more deeply into the gold mine of divine revelation?

J. T. M.

**Concerning the Ordination of Women.**—On this subject, which has become a much-discussed one, the News Bureau of the National Lutheran Council issued the following article, in which there appears a symposium of opinions voiced by officials of the Lutheran Synods of America on the agitated topic.

"American Lutheran leaders see no possibility whatsoever of any development that will open the way for the ordination of women by Lutheran Church bodies in this country, according to an article appearing in the *Newark* (N. J.) *Evening News*.

"Early this year, a law was enacted by the Danish Parliament permitting women to receive holy orders in the Church of Denmark, which, as in all the Scandinavian countries, is Lutheran. Women's groups in Sweden and Norway have also advanced similar proposals for ecclesiastical recognition of women.

"Presidents of all the major Lutheran groups in the U. S. were asked to express their viewpoints on women as ministers, a question that is becoming more and more of an issue in Protestant circles. Without exception, all were opposed.

"Dr. Franklin Clark Fry of New York, president of the United Lutheran Church in America, asserted he was confident that 'the Lutheran Churches in America will be as disinclined to ordain women as our sister Lutheran Church in Denmark has shown itself to be all through the recent controversy in that country.'

"'Only an arbitrary act of Parliament, without consulting the Church, has opened the doors to this innovation,' he said. 'This act has been another demonstration of the undesirability of having the State dominate the Church. Certainly a proposal to ordain women does not arise naturally out of the spirit of the Lutheran Church, which is governed wholly by the Word of God. Our understanding of the Word does not recommend this measure to us.'

"Dr. John W. Behnken of Chicago, president of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio, and Other States, declared that, on the basis of 1 Corinthians 14:34 and 1 Timothy 2:14, 'our Church has held that women should not be ordained to the ministry.'

"'The passages of Scripture speak a clear language,' he added, 'and the Church should certainly follow the instruction given.'

"It was pointed out by the Rev. Albert Jensen of Des Moines, president of the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, that the law passed by the Danish Parliament 'does not compel any of the bishops of the Church of Denmark to ordain a woman, even if she has a call from a parish church,' and that reliable sources state that only one of the nine bishops of Denmark is considering doing so.

"'The two women requesting ordination are slated for rather special service to certain groups, and there seems to be only a remote possibility that women will seek to enter the regular ministry of the Church of Denmark,' he said. 'The entire situation seems to be conspicuous more on account of its unique or odd qualities than because of any serious change of policy, an exception

verifying the rule that the ministry of the Church will be served by men. In my opinion, no deviation from that rule is in prospect for the Lutheran Church in the United States.'

"Comments of other Lutheran churchmen follow:

"Dr. J. A. Aasgard, of Minneapolis, president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church: 'The Evangelical Lutheran Church does not ordain women to the ministry.'

"Dr. Em. Poppen, of Columbus, O., president of the American Lutheran Church: 'I do not know what prompted the Parliament of Denmark to pass that authorization of the ordination of women. The Constitution and By-Laws of the American Lutheran Church do not specify that our pastors must be men, but this is taken for granted. I am sure that a proposal to authorize the ordination of women would not be accepted by the American Lutheran Church at present.'

"Dr. P. O. Bersell, of Minneapolis, president of the Lutheran Augustana Synod: 'The Lutheran Augustana Synod has never been faced with the question of the ordination of women, but I dare say that it will be unalterably opposed to such ordination, should the question ever arise. This stand will be in accordance with apostolic and ecclesiastical traditions.'

"Dr. T. O. Burntvedt, of Minneapolis, president of the Lutheran Free Church: 'The ordination of women is no problem in our Church. It has never been a problem with us and I hope it never will be. I do not favor the ordination of women. I regard it as contrary to the spirit and teachings of Holy Scriptures.'

"Dr. N. C. Carlsen, of Blair, Nebr., president of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church. 'It is inconceivable that the day should ever come when Lutherans in America will ordain women. We find no Scriptural ground for such practice.'"

**Lutheran Merger Suggested.**—An article in the *Lutheran Standard* of May 22 submits the calendar of the Lutheran church bodies which have united in the American Lutheran Conference. The article states that one of these bodies, the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, a body of 30,000 members, which was formerly known as the United Danish Lutheran Church, will discuss at its forthcoming meeting the idea of a merger of the synods forming the American Lutheran Conference. A resolution will be submitted which reads as follows: "Be it resolved that the Church Council of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church be instructed to contact the Church Councils, or authorized officials, of the constituent bodies of the American Lutheran Conference and invite them to initiate discussions collectively by representatives of the five bodies with the view of bringing about greater co-operation and a merger of some form of the five bodies of the American Lutheran Conference." If the United Evangelical Lutheran Church adopts this resolution, then quite likely at the meeting of the American Lutheran Conference, which will be held November 10-12 at Detroit, Mich., the proposed merger will be one

of the topics of discussion. What we of the Missouri Synod desire and pray for is the progress of unadulterated Lutheranism. We hope that the synods concerned will consider the practical question under discussion from this point of view. A.

**Conditions in Palestine.** — The N. L. C. News Bureau sent out the following report: Dr. Edwin A. Moll, who has been in Palestine since December, 1946, as representative of the U. S. A. Committee for the Lutheran World Federation, plans to return to New York about the middle of May, "since transaction of business and my residence in Jerusalem are now utterly impossible," according to a cable received from him by the National Lutheran Council.

Dr. Moll said that "as far as possible, Lutherans, including released internees, are in safe places, and titles to all properties secured for Lutheran World Federation."

He reported that land and buildings at Bir Salim, comprising a farm owned by the Syrian Orphanage, had been seized by the Haganah (a Jewish agency), which is also in possession of the orphanage itself.

Dr. Moll will confer with Lutheran leaders here, after which he plans to return to some country adjacent to Palestine to await re-entry into the Holy Land when advisable.

To the above it should be added that Dr. Moll has arrived in New York and is now reporting orally on conditions in the Holy Land. A.

**Berdyayev Deceased.** — Most of our readers have at some time seen the name of this man, which quite likely they found difficult to pronounce. His full name was Nicolai Alexandrovich Berdyayev. His home was Kiev, Russia, where he was born in 1874. Quite early in life he manifested critical tendencies, and when still a young man, he was banished from his home town and sent to Northern Russia. He had committed the crime of attacking the Holy Synod of the Russian Church, which he called "a political body at the mercy of the civil power." But though he assumed this critical attitude, he never severed his connection with the Orthodox Church of Russia. When the First World War was ended and the revolution in Russia had taken place, he became professor of philosophy in the University of Moscow. Being outspoken, he was banished in 1922. First he lived in Berlin, and there served as editor in chief of the Y. M. C. A. Russian Press. In 1923 he went to Paris, where the organization which he served had in the meantime established its headquarters.

Berdyayev is rated one of the chief religious philosophers of our age. As a young man, he was a follower of Karl Marx, at least in some respects. Later on in life he vigorously assailed the positions held by atheistic Communism. He probably became best known through his widely circulated book *The Fate of Man in the Modern World*. A strange view which he held was that man co-operates with God in the continuation of creation. It is through this co-operation that the work of God goes on and the

ultimate goals of the human race are reached. This can be correctly understood, but mountains of false teaching can hide behind these words. A.

**Self-Communion by the Pastor.**—In the *Australian Lutheran* (February 18, 1948) Dr. Clarence E. Hoopman, president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia, publishes an opinion on "self-communion by the pastor," prepared by the faculty of Concordia College, Unley, S. A., and printed in the *Australasian Theological Review* (January—March, 1943), together with an excellent explanation and advice. He writes (quoted in part): "He [the pastor] is not satisfied to receive the Sacrament once or twice a year, whereas the members of his flock receive it more frequently; but together with his members he wishes to enjoy the full benefit to be derived from frequent participation in this holy Sacrament. He wishes to be an example to the flock in this matter also. As opportunity presents itself, a faithful pastor will, therefore, commune at pastoral conferences, at conventions, and on other occasions. He may also visit a brother minister and commune with him, or invite him to his home for the same purpose. Ministers, however, who live in isolated areas may find even this difficult. The question arises, therefore: May not pastors under certain circumstances give communion to themselves, when they are administering the Sacrament for the benefit of the flock; or may they not ask their congregation to appoint a member of the flock to give them the Sacrament on such an occasion? The matter was freely discussed in some of our pastoral conferences. Members of our faculty at Concordia College gave special consideration to the matter. Finally a report was submitted and adopted by one of our conferences and published in the *Australasian Theological Review* (January—March, 1943). This report reads as follows: 1. There is nothing in Holy Scripture to prevent the pastor from communing with his congregation; on the contrary, it is most reasonable to assume that the "elders" and "bishops" in apostolic times joined in the communion with their flock. 2. The greatest theologians of the Lutheran Church, from Luther down, have declared self-communion by the pastor to be permissible in case of necessity, i. e., when the pastor's isolated situation deprives him of the blessings of the Holy Communion except at long intervals. 3. There seems to be a desire in our circles for a more frequent communion on the part of the pastor than at the few occasions provided by pastoral conferences and synodical meetings. There are many good reasons why this should be recommended, but there is no sound reason why it should be discouraged. 4. Another way of meeting the difficulty is to let the congregation appoint one of its members (one of the deacons or elders) to administer the sacred elements to the pastor. This method must certainly be left open, if pastor and congregation prefer it. 5. If, as a result of a favorable vote by the conference . . . self-communion is introduced in our congregations, it is perhaps desirable that some degree



of uniformity is aimed at. Two ways suggest themselves: a. That the pastor takes the bread and wine *before* he dispenses them to the congregation; b. That he takes the elements *after* all other communicants have received them. In both cases no dispensing words need be used, but the pastor may well add the prayer: May the body of the Lord Jesus Christ, and His precious blood, strengthen and keep me in true faith to life everlasting. Amen. Perhaps (b) is to be preferred, because it corresponds more closely to the method now in use when two pastors officiate. 6. In congregations where self-communion, or reception of the Sacrament at the hands of an elder, has not so far been practiced, the pastor must, of course, discuss the matter with the congregation and give the necessary instruction before the innovation is introduced.—If, therefore, a pastor practices self-communion, or requests one of his congregations to appoint a member to give him communion, this is quite in order, and thus both the pastor and the members of the flock may enjoy the blessings of the Sacrament to the same degree. It is understood, of course, that self-communion, or communion by an appointed elder, should be practiced only in exceptional cases of great need. Wherever the pastor has opportunity to go to the Lord's Table frequently or to have a fellow pastor administer to him the Holy Supper, this is preferable, since this a) is the common usage in our church and, therefore, causes less questioning and confusion; b) does not raise questions or scruples of conscience, for whatever Christians do, they must do with the full conviction that their action or conduct is right, so that they do not violate their conscience; and c) symbolizes the nature and purpose of Holy Communion, not only as a form of preaching the Gospel, but also as an absolution or a solemn declaration of pardon, which, by its very nature, suggests that it be administered by another. Communion by an elder is, therefore, to be preferred to self-communion, though, as the opinion states, there is no clear Scripture passage which forbids the pastor to commune himself. At any rate, the matter should not be treated lightly." J. T. M.

**Walther's "Gesetz und Evangelium" — A Timely Book.**—One of the leading German theologians writes: "Among the publications which your Synod has so kindly sent us [including also our professional magazine] I consider Walther's *Law and Gospel* the most important. For me this work has become extremely important, and I consider it an event of church historical importance that in a time when in many of the Lutheran churches the distinction between Law and Gospel is no longer considered a decisive theme of theology, in your Church this has been accomplished in a theologically penetrating and spiritually impressive manner." Another theologian commented: "Walther's *Law and Gospel* is a most timely book (*"ein aktuelles Werk"*). F. E. MAYER

**What Will Union Do?**—Some men in the front ranks of Christian denominations in our country who are doing concen-



trated thinking on the problems facing our age, are apparently of the opinion that the chief solution of our difficulties lies in removing the divisions that now harass Christendom. E. Stanley Jones has been advocating a federal union of the church bodies, stating that according to his view such a federal union would be a mighty factor in effecting the spiritual rebuilding of our country. A slightly different opinion is voiced by Truman B. Douglass in an article recently published in the *Christian Century*. Dr. Douglass is the executive vice-president of the Board of Home Missions of the Congregational Christian Churches. He gives the article the caption "Federal Union Is Not Enough." What he argues for is a corporate union of the denominations.

Dr. Douglass is moved deeply by the disturbing conditions about us. "The Church in America is losing its contest with the secular order and is losing it at an accelerating rate." Dr. Douglass points out that not only are there more people in the United States today than ever before who have no church connection, but that alongside of them there are ever so many whom you have to call unevangelized because they have never thought of Christianity as "possessing a total claim upon the mind and heart." We are afraid Dr. Douglass is right. We should like to emphasize that the chief cause for alarm is not that there are multitudes of unchurched persons, but rather this, that worldliness has entered the churches and that often no difference can be detected between those within and those outside the fold. But is it not naive to believe that through uniting the denominations this evil can be successfully fought? If people are to be converted, the Word of God has to be preached to them. God must do the converting, and He works through the Word. Men cannot be brought into the arms of the Savior by the mere sight of large numbers that have placed their names on the church lists. What leaders like Dr. Douglass should be concerned about is the question: How can the sweet Gospel of Jesus Christ be brought to the American public more widely, more fully, more persuasively, than is being done at present? It is true that divisions in the Church may keep some people from joining a local congregation; but we believe that their number is rather negligible. The chief trouble is that repentance and forgiveness of sins are not preached and that in thousands of churches Christ, and He crucified, is not the Center of the message heard. A united Christendom is a beautiful thing to contemplate in one's thoughts; but if the preaching and the teaching in it should not be different from what is now offered in the majority of the churches, who would be benefited? That the display of mere numbers will not overcome secularism is strikingly demonstrated by the Church of the Middle Ages. There you had one body, one head, one organization, but at the same time woeful weakness because the Gospel of the Savior was largely kept under the bushel.

A.

**An Attack on Luther in Australia.** — The *Australian Lutheran* (March 3, 1948) quotes from *Catholic Missions* (August, 1947), the "National Magazine of the Pontifical Works for Australia and the Pacific," published in Sydney, N. S. W., the following insidious attack on Luther: "In Martin Luther's birthplace, Eisleben, Thuringia, now in the Russian Zone, there stands a large bronze statue of Lenin. It is set up in the town square by the side of the statue of Luther — the founder of Atheistic Communism and the founder of Protestantism thus standing together. There seems to be something symbolical in this coincidence. Men like Dawson and other historians have pointed out the logical sequence of the so-called reformation, the religious revolt in the early part of the sixteenth century. It denied the teaching authority of the Vicar of Christ; it abolished the priesthood, abandoned five of the seven sacraments, keeping only Baptism and the Lord's Supper (and that only as a memorial), started one national Church after another, became hopelessly divided by the private interpretation of the Bible, made the ruler of a country also its national 'pope,' allowed rationalism to destroy the Scriptures by insane criticism, in the end denied even the divinity of Christ, the existence of hell and the immortality of the human soul, and all these negative tendencies in a straight line have led to the violently anti-God and anti-Christ system of Nazism and Russian and world Communism." To this the *Australian Lutheran* replies: "This attack is typical of the many attacks on Luther and the repeated attempts to foist Nazism and Communism on to Luther and the Lutheran Church. These attacks have been refuted so often that one becomes somewhat nauseated with these repeated slanders. That the Russians erected a statue of Lenin at Eisleben near the statue of Luther in no way connects Communism and Lutheranism. Moreover, the author of this article charges Luther with all the aberrations and follies of Protestant and non-Protestant reformers and enthusiasts and unbelieving critics and rationalists, a charge so plainly false that the author of the article comes under the suspicion of willful perversion of the truth, or of an ignorant passing by of the difference between Lutheranism and Protestantism. . . . Rome has never forgiven and will never forgive Luther for his Reformation work. The attacks on Luther will continue. Historians will be cited for and against the one man, the hero of the Reformation. But one thing is certain also: God's Word, which Martin Luther taught, shall nevermore be brought to naught."

J. T. M.

**Some Comments of Dr. Goodspeed on the Revised Standard Version.** — Since Dr. Edgar Goodspeed was a member of the committee to which we owe the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament, what he says on this translation, explaining and defending certain aspects of it, carries great interest for all theologians. An article of his appeared in the April, 1948, issue of the *Review and Expositor*, published in Louisville, Ky., and edited by the faculty of the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. This

journal in April and July, 1947, had published critical articles by Dr. George W. Paschal concerning the Revised Standard Version. It is with these articles that Dr. Goodspeed's observations concern themselves. We do not intend to reproduce all of his remarks; merely those that are of chief interest will here be submitted.

The critic had expressed the thought that wherever the R. S. V. relies on a different text from that underlying the old versions, the supporting manuscripts should be mentioned in footnotes. The reply is obvious. Such a procedure would have annoyed and confused the overwhelming majority of readers. — The critic had spoken lightly of the Chester-Beattie papyrus of Paul's Epistles and stated his view that it in no sense was worthy to be compared with Codices Aleph and B. Dr. Goodspeed quite properly points out that this papyrus is a hundred years older than the famous codices mentioned, and that hence it deserves careful consideration. He furthermore mentions that contrary to a widespread notion the Revised Version, which appeared in 1881, did not adhere closely to the text of Westcott and Hort, although the members of the translation committee were supplied with advance sheets of the Westcott and Hort edition of the Greek New Testament. — The translation "only" for *monogenees*, John 3:16, is defended by a reference to Luke 7:12 (from the story of the young man at Nain), where the same word occurs. — The view of the critic that *idios* should always be rendered "own" is proved wrong by reference to Acts 24:24. It so happens that Drusilla, who is mentioned there as the wife of Felix, was really not the "own" wife of Felix; he had enticed her away from her rightful husband Aziz, king of Emesa. Dr. Goodspeed mentions a number of other modern translators who have not used the translation "own" in various New Testament passages. — Dr. Paschal had not been satisfied with the R. S. V. rendering of 2 Cor. 5:16, "From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once regarded Christ from a human point of view, we regard Him thus no longer." Dr. Goodspeed correctly points out that this is a much-debated passage and has been rendered in a variety of ways in the modern versions. — The critic objected to the dropping of "ye," "thee," and "thou" (except in prayer) and complains that when "you" is employed in present-day fashion, one cannot always tell whether a singular or a plural is meant. Dr. Goodspeed replies that what the critic objects to is simply characteristic of our modern English speech. — Dr. Paschal did not like the idea that New Testament Greek is called "colloquial" and is not satisfied with the "colloquial" element in the R. S. V. The reply states that the best Greek scholars whom the critic himself wishes to follow tell us that New Testament Greek is "vernacular." — An interesting point is raised by the critic when he states that *amphoterōi* must always be translated "both," and should not be rendered "all" as is done in the R. S. V., Acts 19:16; 23:8. The rejoinder of Dr. Goodspeed is that the 1940 edition of the great Oxford Lexicon of Classical Greek, known as the Liddell-Scott-Jones Lexicon, acknowledges

that the word may have the meaning "all." — The general charge of the critic that the R. S. V. lacks "the prime essential of any translation, accuracy," Dr. Goodspeed naturally says, is not justified. Correct theories of translation have to be considered.

These few remarks are not intended to be an evaluation of Dr. Goodspeed's reply. They are here submitted to aid readers of this journal who are interested in delving more deeply into the question whether the R. S. V. deserves our confidence or not.

A.

**An Evaluation of Barth.** — In *Bibliotheca Sacra*, in the number for January—March, 1948, there appears beside other interesting articles a paper by Dr. Miner Brodhead Stearns on "Protestant Theology Since 1700," with the subheading "Barth and the Barthians." A note states that the author has been writing on Barthian theology and has returned to Europe and studied the subject more specifically. "He has met conservative Christian leaders who were enthusiastic about Barth and still others who consider him highly dangerous, theologically and practically. All that has been learned has only confirmed the opinion already reached for this article, namely, that Barth has been too much influenced by philosophy and by supposedly scientific theory as to the origin of the Scriptures and of man." The author tries to be fair. He endeavors to praise in Barthianism what deserves commendation. Thus he holds that we have to appreciate Barth's efforts "to formulate a theology true to the Word of God." In this connection he says that Barth's ever-growing influence in the warfare of supernaturalism against rationalism is evidence "not so much of his personal power, but rather of the power of the great truths he has proclaimed." The following sentence may sound a note which is too optimistic, "That Barth has completely overthrown, at least on the continent of Europe, the old rationalistic theology of the nineteenth century, is surely a cause for rejoicing." Then Dr. Stearns states that there are two regrettable causes which have kept Barth from reaching a truly Biblical position on important points, first, "an undue respect for the calculations of scientific men both in the field of natural science (evolutionary anthropology) and in that of Biblical criticism," and, in the second place, "the philosophical basis which we may detect underlying his theology, which reveals some of the very detrimental influence of Kant and Hegel."

On Barth's attitude toward the Bible the author quotes a passage from Barth's writings which has been given wide circulation and which we reproduce here because some of our readers may not have seen it. Barth says: "The Bible is the literary monument of an ancient racial religion and of a Hellenistic cultus religion of the Near East. A human document like any other, it can lay no *a priori* claim to special attention and consideration. This judgment, being announced by every tongue and believed in every territory, we may take for granted today. We need not

continue trying to break through an open door. And when now we turn our serious though somewhat dispassionate attention to the objective content of the Bible, we shall not do so in a way to provoke religious enthusiasm and scientific indignation to another battle against 'stark orthodoxy' and 'dead belief in the letter.' For it is too clear that intelligent and fruitful discussion of the Bible begins when the judgment as to its human, its historical and psychological character has been made and *put behind* us. Would that the teachers of our high and lower schools, and with them the progressive element among the clergy of our established churches, would forthwith resolve to have done with a battle that once had its time but has now *had* it! The special *content* of this human document, the remarkable *something* with which the writers of these stories and those who stood behind them were concerned, the Biblical *object*—this is the question that will engage and engross us today." This passage shows definitely that Barth approves of the theories of negative higher criticism which hold that the Bible contains many errors.

Continuing, Dr. Stearns draws attention to some positions of Barth: "The Word of God for Barth is Christ, not the Bible. . . . When God speaks to a man through the Bible, then that is the Word of God to him." Evidently the objective character of the Bible as God's Word is destroyed. Barth distinguishes between reason and revelation, a point in which, of course, he has our approval. But he seems to conceive of revelation altogether "in transcendent terms." "Barthians separate so radically the hearing of the Word of God and the human capacity to apprehend that it is questionable whether it is even possible for them to speak about a human apprehension of revelation." [All this is difficult to understand. Barth's position in this respect is definitely bound up with his view denying the objective character of the Bible as God's Word. If the Bible is God's Word only in those cases when its sayings grip a person and influence him to assume a certain position, then we can understand why for Barth revelation is altogether a transcendent and subjective matter. In that case what is revelation to one will not be revelation to another. A.] Dr. Stearns holds that here Barth definitely shows the influence of Kantian epistemology and to that extent reveals himself as a liberal.

What is Barth's position toward the historical Jesus? One of Barth's friends makes the statement that you have to see how Barth uses the word "historical." This man (Mackintosh) is quoted as describing Barth's position in these words: "In the first place, Barth rightly insists that in this context the word 'historical' must be closely scrutinized. In modern usage 'history' is a radically equivocal term, and we cannot assume that it is capable, in its current meaning, of supplying the framework into which God's revelation must fit. Two ordinary and secular meanings may be distinguished. Historical, first, means that which can be vouched for by scholarly research, working on universally scientific rules.



And, secondly, historical means that which is apprehensible by a neutral observer, devoid of faith. In neither sense is Jesus Christ, in whom God's revelation comes to be described, 'historical.' For history, in this detached sense, Jesus can be no more than a problem or a myth. Faith must pierce deeper; 'though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now we know Him no more.' The ultimate basis for faith is behind and beyond externally perceptible history, the individual facts of which might well be got by heart yet have no revealing power of God vibrating through them; it lies rather in facts that happened, facts witnessed to by prophets and apostles, and now in my own present sent home to me by the Holy Spirit."

Asking the question whether Barth is right in this view of the meaning of "historical," Dr. Stearns correctly points out that many things pertaining to Christ were observed by contemporaries who were devoid of faith, f. i., many of his miracles. What is the use of hesitating to label the works of Jesus as historical merely because many of the people who saw them were refusing to evaluate them properly? Barth seems to be unwilling to distinguish between these two things: the happening of an event and the adequate appraisal of the event. Perhaps Barth's position will become clear when we listen to what he says on the resurrection of Christ. This resurrection must not be called historical, says he. Why not? Because what is termed "historical" is subject to human questionings, investigations, debates, doubts, and denials; you surely do not wish to see this divine event plunged into such muddy waters. To us it seems that Barth is simply using language in a very arbitrary way. When we ordinary people call the resurrection of Christ "historical," we express thereby that it actually came to pass. To him the term would mean that the resurrection may be investigated and doubted. Dr. Stearns holds that when a person interprets Barth in this manner, one is quite charitable. To give another instance, Barth seems to deny the historicity of Adam, actually saying that Adam "has no separate, positive existence." But here, too, reading Barth in the context in which the quoted words occur, one finally reaches the conclusion that he wishes to say the real significance of Adam is something that the ordinary observer cannot discern and divine revelation has to tell us; we are here dealing with something transcendent. But why torture people with such extraordinary, unique methods of expression? Should not a theologian, if he considers his message worth while, use language that everybody can understand? Dr. Stearns points to other doubtful ideas of Barth which, in the last analysis, we believe may simply be due to his peculiar use of language. Barth, it must not be forgotten, is the inexorable foe of easygoing, optimistic humanism, the position that man is the center of the universe, that our heaven is here on earth, and that man can by his own powers make this world a far better place to live in. To shatter such idolatrous conceptions of man's ability and self-sufficiency, Barth uses all the dynamite of thought and language he can muster,



points out again and again the great gulf between the Creator and the creature, and refuses to let human reason dictate our religion. With deep regret we have to say that he is inconsistent.

In conclusion Dr. Stearns has a few things to say about Brunner. Comparing Barth and Brunner and quoting a friend of his who has closely studied the works of both, he informs us that this friend considers Barth to be closer to orthodox Protestantism than Brunner. This scholar holds that Barth makes no concession to liberal theology. Concerning Brunner's position he reports some very damaging things (like denial of the Virgin birth of Jesus), but he thinks that, after all, "Brunner's influence is of the best" and that the pastors who come from his school "preach the entire Gospel." This friend of Dr. Stearns says: "Barth's students often make trouble with statements that are too sweeping and violent. . . . Barth is very exclusive and vehement towards Brunner. Brunner is hurt by it and prays." Both of these men, we should often remind ourselves, at best represent Reformed and not Lutheran theology.

A.

**Availability of Radio for Religious Work Stressed.**—A new organization has been formed in New York, as *R.N.S.* reports, whose aim is to make religious broadcasting a mightier factor than it has been till now. Forty church executives assembled and founded the Protestant Radio Commission. Charles P. Taft, president of the Federal Council of Churches, will be chairman. Fifteen denominations and eight interdenominational agencies are represented. A survey or research study of religious radio is the first thing to be undertaken. Among the objectives are: to give counsel to State, city, and local councils of churches, to sponsor national network religious programs, to represent Protestantism on interfaith broadcasts, to serve as liaison between the churches and the Federal Communications Commission, and to seek to develop "intelligent radio listening on the part of church people." The attempts will be made to merge all Protestant radio activities. Whether this will mean an endeavor to suppress all programs which do not represent the theology of the Federal Council is not revealed.

The move, like the Federal Council itself, with which the Protestant Radio Commission is intimately connected, is, of course, thoroughly unionistic. It is to be feared that but little of the Old Gospel will be heard on the programs which will be produced under the new auspices. But, on the other hand, it cannot be denied that the promoters are wide-awake in their recognition of the significance of the radio for religious work.

A.

**Brief Items from Religious News Service.**—Chinese Communists are aiming at the complete annihilation of the Roman Catholic Church in northern China, according to a survey made by the editors of *Jesuit Missions*, a magazine published in New York. The survey—which reveals that 49 priests and brothers have been killed—expressed fear that at the present rate of

persecution the Catholic Church would be completely destroyed in northern China by the end of 1948. In two years, the report said, 123 Catholic churches were converted into movie theaters, 166 were looted, 25 were destroyed, and 183 were converted into Communist headquarters and meeting places. The Communists also occupied 216 mission stations, looted 245, and destroyed 88. Twelve Catholic schools were burned and 1,071 were closed.

Believed to be the first of their kind, fifteen stained-glass windows installed in Blessed Sacrament Roman Catholic Church in Kansas City, Kans., present Biblical figures clad in modern clothing. Cain appears in farmer's overalls, while the bridegroom in the Cana wedding incident is dressed in a blue business suit, with white shirt and striped tie. As Jesus prepares to turn the water into wine, in the adjoining panel, a beardless man clad in blue denim shirt and trousers and heavy workshoes pours water from one jug to another. Another window, showing Peter, James, and John asleep in the garden, depicts one of the three dozing over a modern newspaper whose headline concerns strikes. In the background is a symbolic arrangement of an exploding atomic bomb, skyscrapers, factories, a searchlight, money bag, and two praying figures.

A rapid and steady growth in Wisconsin private and parochial elementary and secondary schools during recent years is being studied by the state commission on education. Figures showing the trend were collected for the commission and discussed by its members in Madison in connection with the review of Wisconsin educational problems and needs. It was shown that during the decade from 1937 to 1946, public elementary school enrollment throughout the state dropped from 350,402 to 310,012. During that same period public high school enrollment declined from 152,442 to 141,919, but private and parochial schools forged ahead in numbers of students from 11,893 to 15,913.

A New York State assemblyman, Christopher Lawrence, Bronxville, has introduced a resolution in the legislature calling for creation of a five-man joint legislative committee to investigate the subject of "voluntary euthanasia," otherwise known as "mercy killing." Exponents of mercy killing previously had been rebuffed in their attempts to find a legislator who would initiate action, but opponents of euthanasia on Capitol Hill admitted that the resolution gives a foothold to a future law empowering legalized killing of persons incurably ill.

An agreement has been reached with the British government by which the National Lutheran Council—as the United States committee for the Lutheran World Federation—will assume complete charge of Lutheran missions in Palestine. The mission property, clustered in a small area in Jerusalem and vicinity, is valued at 17 to 20 million dollars. Final disposition of the missions,

owned and operated before the war by missionary societies in Germany, will await the provisions of the peace treaty with Germany.

Dr. Henry Smith Leiper, secretary of the American Committee for the World Council, announced that only "properly accredited" press people, from both the secular and religious press, will be admitted to the first assembly of the World Council of Churches at Amsterdam, Holland, August 22 to September 4. The press will be supplied with copies of the main addresses; a daily mimeographed bulletin reporting schedules of meetings, events, and other information; and a "Delegate's Digest," which will contain extracts from addresses, quotes, pictures, and interpretative material. English, French, and German will be the official languages of the assembly.

Bishop Clement D. Rockey of India has reported that since the partition of India there has been a definite swing toward Christianity, especially on the part of Moslems.

To reduce expenses of maintenance, six Protestant churches in east Boston, representing four different denominations, will vote on a merger plan, according to the Rev. William J. Villaum, director of research and planning for the Massachusetts Council of Churches. The identity of the churches will not be announced until after the members have voted.

Dr. E. J. Homrighausen, professor of Christian education at Princeton Theological Seminary, has begun his duties as secretary of evangelism in the World Council of Churches' Department of Reconstruction. His task is to organize and inspire evangelistic work throughout Europe and prepare for the anticipated creation of a separate department of evangelism by the Assembly of the World Council in Amsterdam, Holland.

Ten new languages and dialects were added last year to the list of Bible translations, bringing the total to 1,090, according to a survey by the American Bible Society.

New languages are Aztec, Chol, Mixteco, Tarahumara, Tzeltal and Tzotil, spoken in Mexico; Naga: Chang and Naga; Mao, used in Assam; Nantcheri, prevalent in French Equatorial Africa; and Palau, found in Micronesia.

Far-reaching changes in the internal administration of the Norwegian State Lutheran Church are recommended in the report of a special governmental commission set up in November, 1945, under the chairmanship of Bishop Elvind Berggrav, Primate of the church. One of the commission's most important recommendations concerns the establishment of a church Council, to consist of 25 members, the majority of whom will be laymen. The Council will include nine clergymen and two theological professors, but only three of Norway's eight Lutheran bishops will

have seats. The Council will meet once a year and will be the supreme body of the Norwegian Church in all spiritual and internal matters. It will have the right to be heard by the king in all disputes involving ritual questions, and will be consulted before any laws are introduced in Parliament affecting the spiritual life of the church.

Finnish government authorities have approved plans for the establishment of a self-supporting Roman Catholic Junior High School in Helsinki. The school is intended principally for children of English-speaking parents, but will also admit Finnish children. All courses will be conducted in English. Finland has about 3,000 Catholics, served by three churches and five priests.

Dr. J. B. Lawrence, executive secretary of the Home Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, has estimated that more than 80 per cent of the people in the South never go to any church. He said, "We must get out from the walls of our churches and carry the gospel to the people where they are. We need large numbers of missionaries who will be willing to live in trailers in migrant camps over the land and be schoolteachers and ministers in these needy communities."

Douglas A. Hyde, for five years news editor of the *Daily Worker*, London communist paper, has resigned from his job and the communist party and intends to join the Roman Catholic Church. In a statement explaining his decision, Hyde said he had been "appalled by what has happened in recent weeks in Czechoslovakia."

The American Bible Society reported that during 1947 a total of 9,310,439 copies of the Scriptures, written in 167 languages, were circulated. Calls for Scriptures in the United States accounted for 4,020,683 copies of the total.

